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Revised

The Actor;

OR,

A Son of Thespis.

AN ORIGINAL COMEDY-DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS.

BY

MILTON NOBLES.

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1891



A SON OF THESPIS.

An Original Comedy-Drama in Four Acts,

BY

MILTON NOBLES.

ACT I.—NEW YORK CITY, September, 1861.

ACTS II, III and IV.—NEW ENGLAND, 1879.

CHARACTERS.

ACT I.

WARREN MERRILL, a Banker.

BERNARD CARROLL, his Partner.

WILLIAM GOODALL, his Private Secretary, an Actor.

PHILIP HAWLEY, his Bookkeeper.

A Servant to Merrill.

PHILANDER PHIPPS, a Comedian and Stage Manager.

PHILLIS, the Banker's Daughter, secretly married to Goodall.

ACTS II, III, IV.—18 Years Later.

WILLIAM GOODALL, now known as F. Junius Betterton, a "palmy day" Tragedian.

PHILANDER PHIPPS, known as Burton Wallack, a Comedian, companion to Betterton.

COL. TOM ALCHOSTRA, of Texas.

BERNARD CARROLL.

ARTHUR MARRIGOLD.

REUBEN HAWKINS, a Country Bumpkin.

SOPHOCLES SPOTT, of the private detective firm of Spott & Bleedem, (successors to Ketchum & Workem.)

MARSHALL STALK, Servant to Mrs. Marrigold.

PHILLIS GOODALL.

DOROTHY GOODALL, her Daughter, aged 17.

MRS. MADGE MARRIGOLD, a Widow.

PHOEBE ADAMS.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Guests at Marrigold Villa.

ACT I.—Residence of WARREN MERRILL, New York City, September, 1861.

ACT II.—18 years later. A New England Summer Resort.

ACTS III and IV.—Mrs. MARRIGOLD's Villa.

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A SON OF THESPIIS.

AN ORIGINAL COMEDY-DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

BY

MILTON NOBLES.

ACT I.

Library in Warren Merrill's house, New York City.

[*Enter SERVANT, preceding BERNARD CARROLL.*

Servant. Mr. Merrill is at breakfast, sir. Shall I say to him that you are here?

Carroll. Yes; no, on second thought, don't disturb him; is Miss Merrill with him?

Servant. No, sir; she breakfasted early and went for a ride in the park.

Carroll. Alone?

Servant. So far as I know; yes, sir.

Carroll. Thank you; I will await Mr. Merrill here. [*Exit SERVANT C.*] Riding in the park, eh, and alone! Possibly. These early morning park rides are of a daily occurrence now; strange that her father can be so blind or indifferent.

[*Enter WARREN MERRILL L. I. E., dressing gown, etc.*

Merrill. [*Cordially.*] Why, Bernard, this is an unexpected pleasure. You haven't favored us often of late. Be seated.

[*They sit.*

Carroll. Thank you. I feel even now that my visit is ill-timed and I scarcely know how to apologize for calling at such an untimely hour.

Merrill. Don't mention it, my dear boy. Both Phillis and myself have frequently regretted that you of late make yourself so much a stranger.

Carroll. It is better for *me* that it should be so.

Merrill. O, yes, yes; I understand. But I fancied that in your devotion to business and the Bachelor's Club you had outlived that fleeting fancy.

Carroll. There you do me a great wrong. The feeling that I entertain for your daughter is something more than a fleeting fancy, as you are pleased to call it.

Merrill. Pardon me, my dear boy. Nothing could be farther from my mind than a wish to make light of your disappointment. But you are still young, rich and courted. Your life and its triumphs are all before you.

Carroll. You are very kind. I do not complain. If I have a concern it is for those dearer to me than my own life.

Merrill. Indeed!

Carroll. Mr. Merrill, you have treated me with princely generosity.

Merrill. I have *tried* to treat you *justly*. Your father served me long and faithfully, and, dying, requested me to see you safely started in life. I placed you in a responsible position which you filled so entirely to my satisfaction that at the end of four years I made you a member of the firm. This was not generosity, but justice; you had earned the position, and since assuming it you have by integrity and thoughtfulness relieved me of many cares and responsibilities.

Carroll. I have tried to prove my appreciation of your confidence, and it is a desire to further emphasize that loyalty to your interests which emboldens me to speak upon a subject near to both of us.

Merrill. And that is?—

Carroll. The approaching marriage of your daughter with this unknown actor, Goodall.

Merrill. Excuse me, Mr. Carroll; but I do not quite like your tone. So long as I supposed that Phillis was fancy free I did not oppose your suit; indeed, I rather encouraged it. But when she told me frankly that your attentions were distasteful to her, my interest ended. For reasons adequate to me, I have determined that my daughter shall select her own life partner, provided the one selected be a man of character and respectability.

Carroll. You are frank, sir, which moves me to be equally candid in stating at once the object of my unusual visit, which you have entirely misconstrued, to my discredit. Last night, upon examining the clearing house returns, I discovered that we have during the past three months been the victims of extensive systematic forgeries.

Merrill. Forgeries? [Enter SERVANT C.]

Servant. Your daughter is just returning, sir, accompanied by Mr. Goodall. Shall I tell them that you are engaged here?

Merrill. No; say nothing at present. [Exit SERVANT C. L.] Come to my study, Bernard; we will continue our consultation there. [Exit MERRILL AND CARROLL, R. I. E.]

[Enter PHILLIS AND GOODALL, L. C., both in riding costumes.]

Phillis. You are quite sure that you are not neglecting business?

Goodall. Quite. It's just nine, and I can do nothing at the bank until ten.

Phillis. Then we have a half hour for a nice visit.

[*Flute and drum outside.*]

Goodall. There they go, drumming up recruits. Two of my oldest companions, both splendid young actors and noble fellows, enlisted as private soldiers yesterday.

Phillis. Why don't you go to the war, too?

Goodall. Why! Because as Venus conquered Thespis, so Hymen has vanquished Mars.

Phillis. Very pretty and very sweet. It's awfully nice of

you to take your morning ride in the park just as I happen to be taking mine.

Goodall. O, I'm very thoughtful that way. Besides, it isn't every fellow who can enjoy the novelty of clandestine meetings with his own wife. [*Tries to caress her.*]

Phillis. Please don't speak so loud, and, above all, use a little judgment as to the time and place for kissing me. I love to hear you call me wife, and I love your tender caresses, yet they make me fear and tremble like a guilty thing.

Goodall. The fault was mine, not yours, not yours. I was a strong man, you a confiding girl. It was my duty to have waited patiently for the great happiness reserved for me. But O, the fear of losing you ! And then our pleasant banter about surprising your father with a secret marriage became a temptation to me to make sure of the prize.

Phillis. And had I said no it would have ended there, so the fault is more mine than yours.

Goodall. And when it was done, like two children, who had robbed the pantry of its choicest jar of jam, we lacked the courage to confess.

Phillis. And now I tremble for what may follow when he learns the truth.

Goodall. Why need he know ? He promised you to me at the end of a year's probation. We have but three months to wait. Then we can be married all over again. Think of the novelty of being twice married to the man of your choice and enjoying a second honeymoon all in the space of a year. Your father will, of course, feel aggrieved at first ; but in after years we will all regard it as a clever lovers' ruse.

Phillis. I wish I could feel as cheerful. But each day I feel more guilty for having deceived so indulgent and loving father. [*She clings to him.*]

Goodall. Now, sweetheart, don't cry again. You make me feel like a brute. It takes all the heart and courage out of

me. This is the third morning on which you have had a crying spell, and I can't stand your tears.

Phillis. O, my darling, can you not guess why, for the past few days, I have been at times so apparently unhappy? I have tried so hard to be cheerful, too. Will, darling, I have shrunk from telling you, but further concealment would be a crime. Our father must know the truth of our marriage at once. [*She speaks this with her head hidden on his shoulder.*]

Goodall. My sweet wife, forgive me for not better understanding you. I think I now realize my responsibility and see plainly the path of duty. There can be but one result, and that will be happiness for us all.

Phillis. Do you still feel so confident?

Goodall. More so than ever now. Even should he for a time withhold his forgiveness, love will find a way to reach his heart. We have committed a great folly, but it was not a crime. But in any event, we cannot suffer, save in the loss of his affection. I shall still have my *art*, and with it an inspiration that I have never known before. Besides, dear, the savings of my years of prosperity I have invested in your name. I had intended this as a wedding day surprise.

Phillis. It was like your good, unselfish heart. But you will tell our father all to-day. [*They are moving* L.]

Goodall. Yes, sweetheart; I shall tell him all promptly upon his arrival at the bank this morning.

[*Exit PHILLIS and GOODALL* L. 2. or I. E.]

Servant. [*Outside* L. C.] Mr. Merrill is engaged, sir, and cannot see you.

Hawley. [*Outside* L.] He will see me! He *must* see me! [*SERVANT enters C. followed by HAWLEY.*] I know it's unusual and unceremonious, but it's an urgent case. Mr. Carroll is here; I saw him enter a half hour ago, and I must see him at once.

Servant. He is engaged at present with Mr. Merrill, in the study.

Hawley. No matter; take in this card. [*Gives card to SERVANT.*] It's as important to him as it is to me. Don't wait! Don't wait!

[*SERVANT exits reluctantly R. I. E.; HAWLEY drops into a seat.*

Hawley. It has come at last! I might have known it, and I may thank that actor for it all. Curse him! I wish I had a drop of brandy to steady my nerves. Just as I fancied I had found a little favor in her eyes, he comes to dazzle her with the tinsel and glitter of his theatrical ways. Curse his handsome face! O, for a drop of brandy, just one drop!

[*Rises, then sinks into a chair as CARROLL enters R.*

Carroll. Well, sir, what is the explanation of this?

Hawley. Excuse me, sir; but you are usually so early at the bank—I thought that—that—has anything of great importance happened, sir?

Carroll. Why do you ask?

Hawley. Because, sir, since daylight there has been a sullen crowd about the bank door, and it is constantly increasing.

Carroll. [*Aside.*] My plot is working admirably. [*Aloud.*] What do they want?

Hawley. I don't know, sir; but it looks very much like a run on the bank.

Carroll. You seem strangely excited.

Hawley. Why not? As principal bookkeeper, I am naturally concerned. I was refused admission to the bank by an officer.

Carroll. Sit down, young man, and keep quiet. The affairs of this bank are no concern of yours. But I appreciate your anxiety. Let me see; it is now about six months since I first discovered that you were exercising your skill as a penman in raising the cheques of the firm from small to large amounts.

Hawley. You discovered my first crime. It was a small matter of twenty odd dollars, which I honestly intended to replace from my month's earnings. Why did you not then discharge and punish me?

Carroll. Don't speak so loud. I did not expose you for the reason that I appreciated the possible value to me of so expert a penman's services.

Hawley. In other words, you have for six months held open before me the doors of Sing Sing, while compelling me to rob your own firm of a half million dollars, which you have skillfully added to your own private fortune. But it shall go no farther. I am not quite dead to the voice of conscience. Mr. Merrill took me, a friendless orphan, from the street, educated me and placed me in a position to win an honorable position in the world, had I possessed the character for which he gave me credit. If this firm is wrecked through your unparalleled and audacious villainy, with my connivance, I'll tell Mr. Merrill the truth, if I end my days in State's prison.

Carroll. You will do nothing so absurdly foolish.

Hawley. Yes, I will; and if you drive me to it, I'll kill you and end it on the gallows. I will; I swear it!

[*Jump up, strikes table.*]

Carroll. Sit down, and don't swear. There is no reason why you should end your days in prison or on the gallows. True, extensive forgeries have been committed, and they have been so committed that they can be easily traced to you. But there is absolutely nothing to connect me with the forgeries, and the unsupported statements of convicted forgers, fortunately, have little weight in courts of law.

[*HAWLEY groans and buries his face in his hands.*]

Hawley. Oh! [*groans.*]

Carroll. Now, don't be a baby. For two years you have been insanely in love with Phillis Merrill. [*HAWLEY looks up surprised.*] You see I know your secret thoughts.

Hawley. True! true! And that love, which should have been my inspiration, has been my curse.

Carroll. That's as you choose to make it. You stood as good a chance as any one until the present favorite came upon the scene. With him safely removed, fortune, honors and love may yet be yours.

Hawley. Removed! how?

Carroll. Disgraced, dishonored and cast adrift.

Hawley. I am in no state for solving enigmas.

Carroll. The bank of Merrill & Carroll will be wrecked this day, through extensive forgeries that have absorbed its available capital. Mr. Merrill's infatuation for this vagabond actor is so great that four months ago, *at my suggestion*, he authorized him to sign the firm's name to cheques for current expenses. The rest is easily told. The confidential secretary and accepted suitor has robbed his benefactor.

Hawley. O, this is a horrible plot! Goodall is the soul of honor. While I have secretly hated him, he has been like a brother to me, concealing my shortcomings from Mr. Merrill, and trying in every possible way to make me reform my vicious habits.

Carroll. Yet he has robbed you of a woman's love, and made you the wretch that you fancy yourself to be.

Hawley. [*Jumping up.*] True—he has; curse him, he has.

Carroll. [*Aside.*] I thought so. [*Aloud, looking at watch.*] It is now 9.30. Go to the bank, and say to any who ask that I will be there at 10 sharp.

Hawley. You will protect me from arrest?

Carroll. Yes, of course; you serve yourself in serving me. What could I gain by punishing you? There, go! go, now, go. [*CARROLL urges HAWLEY off C. L.*] He was a little more fractious than I expected. Men in our business can't afford to be troubled with a conscience. [*Going towards door R. I.*] Now that I am safely through with him, what can I do with

him? That's something of a problem. A brilliant idea! He would make an excellent soldier, in case I should require a substitute.

[EX. R. I. E. *Enter* C. L. PHILANDER PHIPPS, *cautiously, hat in hand.*]

Phipps. It's astonishing how these swells make folks wait. A lacquey with a ramrod down his back let me in a quarter of an hour ago, and then disappeared, leaving me to amuse myself, counting the tiles. [*Enter* SERVANT, R. I. E.]

Servant. O, you're here; are you?

Phipps. I am, great duke, in *propia persona*.

Servant. In what?

Phipps. In a hurry. Did you give my card to Mr. Goodall?

Servant. Not yet. Haven't found him. I think he must be in the music room, with Miss Merrill.

Phipps. Go! Seek him there! [*Servant* X. L.] Music hath' charms to soothe the savage breast!

Servant. Eh! What's that?

Phipps. Stand not upon the order, but *go* at once. [*Servant exits quickly* L. I. E.] I hope this may not prove a fool's errand. I expect its rather bad form, following him up here, but time is precious, and a ten o'clock rehearsal knows no law, excepting for stars and leading ladies; they are a law unto themselves.

[*Enter* GOODALL L. *He grasps PHIPPS' hand cordially.*]

Goodall. Why, Phipps, old man, aren't you lost?

Phipps. I certainly feel strangely out of place. I went to your hotel. Got there, of course, just after you had left. The clerk, who knew me from former visits, gave me a pointer, with a wink, and, as I had a ten o'clock rehearsal, I made bold.

Goodall. All right old fellow; what can I do for you?

Phipps. For me, O, nothing, thank you. I'm all right. But you know the widows and children of those poor firemen who were killed at the big fire night before last, are very destitute.

Goodall. Poor souls ! How many were killed ?

Phipps. Five. There are four widows, and at least a dozen children. The case demands immediate action. That means, of course, that we must do something for them, while the charitable societies are trying to find out what church they belong to.

Goodall. O, yes ; I see.

Phipps. Now Fox wants to give them a rouser to-morrow night. Julia Dean, John Owens, Mrs. Farren, Whalley, Mrs. Jordan and a dozen others have volunteered. The notice is short, but Fox says that if he could get a card in the morning papers, announcing that Billy Goodall would re-appear for this occasion only, and play Romeo to Julia Dean's Juliet, he could sell every seat in the house at a premium in two hours.

Goodall. I fear George's enthusiasm outruns his judgment, so far as I am concerned. However, tell him he can count on me for the benefit of the widows and orphans.

Phipps. Do you mean it ?

Goodall. [*Mock heroic.*] Place me where the foe is most dreaded, where France most needs a life. [*Both laugh heartily.*]

Phipps. That sounds like old times, Billy ; I'd give half a week's salary myself to see you play Claude again.

Goodall. Would you ? Come around to my rooms some Sunday afternoon, and I'll spout for you half an hour, and you can give the salary to the orphans.

Phipps. I'll do it. Do you know I came with fear and trembling, but now I'm glad I've come.

Goodall. How are all the boys and girls ?

Phipps. All well. But O, how we miss you. Why don't you drop into the green room once in a while and give us an imitation of Forrest, just to drive away the blue devils.

Goodall. I will, some night.

Phipps. Good. Forrest plays with us next week. Drop

in then. No one enjoys the imitation more than the Governor himself.

Goodall. I know it, bless his big heart. Tell Fox I've not forgotten my promise to do Pythias to Davenport's Damon for the benefit of St. John's Guild.

Phipps. O, we've got you down for that. And then you know you can't refuse to do Tom Tape to Sue Dennin's Sally Scraggs for her benefit next month.

Goodall. Sure enough. And yesterday Ned Adams wrote me that I must play Volage for his benefit at the Winter Garden in December.

Phipps. Good! And, of course, you'll have to do Badger last night of the season for the Newsboys' Home.

Goodall. Great Scott! I'll be back in harness again if I don't draw the line somewhere. Come, I'll see you safely out.

[GOODALL AND PHIPPS *exit* C. L. PHILLIS *enters* L. I. E.]

Phillis. Will, Will, darling, where are you! Not here! He said he would return in a moment. [X *and listens at door* R.] I wonder if he is with papa. I hope so. O, I shall be so glad when it is all over and the whole truth known. I can hear voices, and papa speaking loud and angrily. How unlike him. But I can't hear Will's voice. How sick at heart I grow with apprehension and suspense. They are coming. Where can I go? [*Enter* CARROLL R.] Too late.

Carroll. It is a desperate game, but the stake is worth the risk. [*Sees Phillis.*] Miss Merrill! This is a pleasure I did not anticipate.

Phillis. I was about going to the music room; will you excuse me?

Carroll. I trust I have not frightened you away?

Phillis. Not at all. But as your visit is evidently a business one, it cannot interest or concern me.

Carroll. Pardon me. That it concerns you, is beyond doubt. That it will interest you, is for yourself to determine.

Phillis. Will you be seated? [*They sit.*]

Carroll. Miss Merrill, a grave crisis has arisen in your father's affairs. I refer to it at his request. The precise nature of the crisis you will learn from himself. My object in mentioning it to you is a desire to assure you in advance that no change which may occur in your worldly condition will alter the feelings I have so long entertained for you.

Phillis. [*Rising.*] Pardon me, Mr. Carroll. If the purpose of this interview is to renew a subject long since interdicted, I must ask you to excuse me.

Carroll. One word more, and I am silent for all time. When the blow falls, as fall it must, remember this: so far as I am concerned, the past will be forgotten. You will still be Phillis Merrill, the daughter of my friend and benefactor, the one perfect image that has filled and shall continue to occupy my heart, to the exclusion of all others.

[*PHILLIS rises indignantly, is about to speak, checks herself and bows formally.*]

Phillis. Good morning, Mr. Carroll.

[*Exit PHILLIS L. I. E.*]

Carroll. Heartless and scornful to the last.

[*Enter WARREN MERRILL R. I.*]

Merrill. You have seen Phillis?

Carroll. Yes, for a moment only.

Merrill. And you prepared her for the blow?

Carroll. Yes, but without intimating its exact nature.

[*MERRILL drops into a seat.*]

Merrill. Phillis, my darling, my only one; I feel it for her, only for her.

Carroll. We must be brave, sir. There will surely be a little saved from the wreck. Besides, being a single man, with few responsibilities, I have been enabled to accumulate a small competence, safe from the reach of the law. I did this when

I had hopes of gaining your daughter's hand. This shall be at your disposal, or hers.

Merrill. How could I have been so deceived? I would have staked my life on Goodall's honor and integrity.

Carroll. The taking of a perfect stranger into your confidence and affections was a credit to your heart, if not to your judgment. But practical philanthropists like yourself are continually imposed upon.

Merrill. Poor Phillis! How can I tell her? She loves him so absolutely. [*Enter* PHILLIS L.

Carroll. Your daughter, Mr. Merrill. With your permission, I will write a few lines in your study before going to the bank. [*Exit* CARROLL R. I. E.

Phillis. [*Kneeling at her father's feet.*] Father, dear, what has happened! Something terrible, I know; your hands are like ice, and there are tears in your eyes. Let me kiss them away. [*She kisses and caresses him.*

Merrill. They are not for myself, not for any ill that can befall me, but for you, my pride, my joy. The loved image and sweet reminder of a sainted mother. For you, the precious link that binds the present to the past.

Phillis. For me, father dear? Then do not keep it from me. If it is but business misfortune, do not give it a thought. You are still in life's prime. William and I are young and strong, and safe in each other's love; we three can laugh away worldly troubles like May day clouds.

Merrill. My brave girl. If it were only that. But I am glad that you have courage. You will need it all. Phillis, my child, a terrible truth must be told, though two hearts break in the telling. The man whom you so dearly love and whom I have honored and trusted, has basely betrayed the love and confidence reposed in him. [PHILLIS rises.

Phillis. [*Aside.*] Then he has told all, even sooner than I

expected. [*Aloud.*] The fault was not his alone, father. Am I not equally guilty?

Merrill. Guilty? *You* guilty? What could you have known of these audacious forgeries?

Phillis. Forgeries?

Merrill. Yes, child, forgeries. A terrible crime at any time, but doubly base when linked with ingratitude.

Phillis. Forgeries! Ingratitude! Father, I fear I do not quite understand you. Have you had an interview with William—I mean with Mr. Goodall—since our return from the Park?

Merrill. No, child; I have not seen him since yesterday. That trying ordeal I have yet to pass.

Phillis. [*Aside.*] Not seen him since yesterday? Forgery? Ingratitude? O, father, in mercy's name, tell me what is this terrible crime to which you allude?

Merrill. Phillis, my child, your affianced husband, my confidential secretary, has, by a series of infamous forgeries, wrecked the bank of Merrill & Carroll.

Phillis. [*Jumping up.*] I don't believe it! Though an angel from Heaven should proclaim it, I would still say, No! No! No!

Merrill. Phillis, my child, your love has been as blind as my faith. We are both deceived and outraged.

Phillis. But the proofs, father! The charge is a terrible one. What are the proofs?

Merrill. They are ample, I grieve to say. Four months ago, at Carroll's suggestion, I foolishly gave him authority to sign the firm's name. While his crime is technically but a breach of trust, it is in his case even more dastardly than downright forgery.

Phillis. Father, as sure as there is justice in Heaven, you are making a terrible mistake.

Merrill. Would that I were. But the evidence is too terri-

bly clear. Mr. Carroll has even located property that he has been buying with his stolen gains.

Phillis. [*Aside.*] Mr. Carroll! Property that he has been buying!

[*GOODALL enters C. L. PHILLIS tries to run to him, is stopped by her father.*]

Phillis. O, Will, my darling, prove this base—

Merrill. Not a word.

Goodall. Good morning, Mr. Merrill. I hope you will not be annoyed with me for stealing an hour's sweet-hearting before going to business.

Merrill. Phillis, I must ask you to retire. I have important matters to discuss with Mr. Goodall.

Goodall. [*Aside.*] This is very strange.

[*MERRILL leads PHILLIS to door L. I.*]

Phillis. Don't condemn him unheard. Give him a chance to defend himself, and face his accusers. Promise me.

Merrill. He shall have every chance. If he even denies his guilt, I shall be half inclined to believe him.

Phillis. God bless you, my noble father.

[*MERRILL kisses her. She exits L. I. E., with a longing look at GOODALL.*]

Goodall. [*Aside.*] Now, I understand. Brave-hearted girl! To spare me the ordeal, she has confessed all herself. Bless her noble heart.

Merrill. [*Motions GOODALL to sit R. He sits C. himself.*] Mr. Goodall, looking into your frank, open face, I find it difficult to believe that I could have so greatly erred in my judgment of men, as I have done in your case. Less than two years ago, my daughter conceived for you what I fancied to be a girlish infatuation for a popular idol. You were the stage hero of the hour, young, gifted and courted. With none of that bigoted prejudice against your art which is affected by shallow minds, I made you a welcome guest at my house,

among others, men of taste and cultivation like yourself. I desired my daughter to know the actor in his character of a man and citizen. I frankly confess that this nearer contact soon convinced me the feeling was, on her part, a sincere passion, a sentiment which you assured me was honestly reciprocated. Did I deny you my daughter's society, or forbid you my house? No. The lesson of my own life struggles stood before me. It was a story of a poor man's love for a rich man's daughter, of a happy union after many trials and humiliations; a brief year of wedded bliss, the birth of a daughter in our humble, but happy home, and the tranquil death of the mother. She crossed the silent river with a smile upon her face, saying: "I have loved and have been loved in return. I have brought your reward, I go to seek my own." The memory of that sainted woman's love and her noble death have been the guiding stars of my life. The love of the mother reflected in the daughter's face, has been my inspiration and my hope. As she has grown to lovely womanhood, it has been my wish to see her love and wed an honest man, who should love her in return. I believed that the hour had brought forth the man. In blind faith, I took him into my heart and home. I simply asked in return that for a period of one year he renounce his profession and follow mine. I knew that he loved his art and that such a test, if accepted and faithfully fulfilled, would prove the sincerity of his affection. William Goodall, you are that man. I confided to you my business interests and my daughter's spotless name. You cheerfully accepted the great responsibility. How have you discharged the trust? [GOODALL hangs his head in silence.] Shall I answer for you? Like a thief you have entered the home of a man who confided in your honor, to rob him of his treasure. Do I wrong you, sir?

Goodall. No! No! No! No words of yours can paint my conduct in colors more abhorrent than I now see it myself. But let the blame fall on me alone, for I alone am guilty.

Merrill. Then you confess all?

Goodall. The act has been committed. The time has arrived when the truth must be told, and I had resolved to confess the foolish act to you this very morning. I have been weak, selfish and ungrateful, and ingratitude is the basest of crimes.

Merrill. Enough! The same roof can no longer shelter my daughter and yourself. The law will not be invoked against you.

Goodall. The law?

Merrill. I leave your punishment to your God and your conscience. [CARROLL enters R. goes down R. slowly.

Goodall. Then you intend to separate us!

Merrill. Audacious criminal! Dare you dream otherwise?

Goodall. And it is *her* will?

Merrill. She has now no will but mine. [PHILLIS enters L.

Goodall. She is here, let her speak. Phillis—

Merrill. Do not dare to approach her, sir. Phillis, my daughter, this ingrate has freely confessed his crime.

[PHILLIS groans, looks at GOODALL. His head falls.

Phillis. It is true! It is true! O, how I have loved him! All for this!

Merrill. My child, this roof can no longer shelter you both. He has demanded that you choose between us.

[PHILLIS looks wildly from one to the other.

Goodall. And you can hesitate, now?

[Military band in distance playing, "The Girl I Left Behind Me." PHILLIS still struggling, is about to swoon. CARROLL offers to support her. She repulses him with a gesture, and falls at her father's feet with a groan.]

Merrill. You see, sir? You see?

Goodall. Had I a hundred eyes, each eye would see that agony. Had I a hundred ears, each ear had heard that groan. Had I a thousand lives, I'd give them all to save that break-

ing heart one pang. [*Music louder and cheers.*] Do you hear those sounds! They tell of men going forth to battle for a nation's life. Husbands, fathers, brothers and lovers tear themselves from clinging arms to form a mighty host. My place is there. [*PHILLIS recovering and rising, and moves toward GOODALL. Her FATHER stands between.*] No mother bids her son go forth, no lover holds him in a last embrace, no wife with streaming eyes holds up her baby for a farewell kiss, but to the God of battles this day I offer a name dishonored and a love disowned. [*Exit GOODALL.*]

[*PHILLIS makes one despairing effort to reach him, and swoons in her father's arms.*]

Stage and auditorium darkened. Scene at back is illuminated by strong lights, showing a series of painted tableaux about 12 x 14 feet, as follows:

FIRST PICTURE.—*Troops departing for the War. Music, "The Girl I Left Behind Me."*

SECOND PICTURE.—*Battle scene. A Federal Victory. Music, "Rally Round the Flag."*

THIRD PICTURE.—*Battle scene. Confederate victory. In foreground a wounded Federal soldier, dying, a Confederate officer bending over him tenderly, other Federals, prisoners to Confederates, etc. In background Federals in retreat, Confederates in pursuit, etc. Music, "Dixie."*

FOURTH PICTURE.—*Desolation of War, night scene, a battle field after a battle. Dead bodies of men and horses, broken cannon. etc. Wolves devouring the bodies. Buzzards hovering over the field, others eating at the bodies. Music, "Dead March."*

FIFTH PICTURE.—*Peace. A beautiful pastoral scene. Strong sunlight. Schoolhouse on left, children playing about schoolhouse. Flag flying over school. Picnic party on right in foreground. In background farmer ploughing, others reaping, etc., etc. Music, "Star Spangled Banner."*

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

EIGHTEEN YEARS LATER.

A New England landscape, mountain background. On top of mountain, overlooking valley in foreground, a large modern summer hotel. On R., large set country house, with practical veranda. Steps leading to veranda. House extends back from first groves. On L., running back from first groves, set high iron fence, with high arched gate in C. Gate to come in 2, entrance on arch over gate in plain letters—"Marrigold Villa." Rustic table, bench and chairs R. other garden furniture, flowers, plants, etc., ad. lib. Picket fence in 4 with gate open in C. At rise enters Rube Hawkins, with rake and pitchfork, a New England bumpkin about 25, yellow hair, florid face, hickory shirt, overalls tucked inside of red-topped boots.

Rube. Gol darned if I'm going to stay out in that brilin' sun any longer ; jes because old Zeb Sawyer happens to be my father's second cousin, he pretends to take a great interest in me. Gets me over here mornin's and evenin's to do chores, as he calls it, for two dollars a week, and then sends me out to rake and stack a couple tons of hay, jest to kill time, as he says, between meals. Durned ef I know what makes me do it. Guess its a kinder sneakin' likin' for my second cousin, Phœbe. She does nothin' but abuse me, and that seems to make me hanker arter her all the more. Guess I'll jest light my pipe and take a snooze under that old apple tree.

[*Exit R. above house. PHŒBE enters from house R. She goes up C.*]

Phœbe. [*Calling.*] Rube! hey Rube! Rube Hawkins! I never did see such a stupid idiot as that man is. Rube! Rube Hawkins! I know as well as I know anything that the big

lunkhead is snoozing somewhere in a shady spot, and heard me as plain as day. Hey, Rube!

Rube. [*Off R.*] Hello!

Phæbe. You're wanted here.

Rube. Well, I'm here.

Phæbe. I said here!

Rube. So did I say here!

Phæbe. Well, when I say here I don't mean there. [*RUBE enters R.*] Why didn't you come when I called you?

Rube. Didn't I come?

Phæbe. Yes, after I had nearly hollered my lungs out.

Rube. I like to hear you holler, your voice has such a soothing effect on me. [*Smoking his pipe.*]

Phæbe. Stop puffing that horrible cabbage leaf in my face.

Rube. Anything to oblige the fair sex. [*Puts pipe in pocket.*] Phebe, you're a tartar, and you just ride right over me, but somehow I seem to like it. I suppose that's all the good it'll do me

Phæbe. You're right for once in your life. Why can't you be around me five minutes without being silly, you big, overgrown gawky?

Rube. Well, it aint my fault, is it, if you effect me that way?

Phæbe. That'll do now. Uncle Sawyer has just got word that there will be a lot of city people up on the stage to-day looking for nice country board. Now, you are to hurry out and milk the cows and take all of the milk up to the big hotel on the hill. Then you are to take that jar of cream from the spring house, and all of the young chickens that are fit to kill, over to Mrs. Marrigold's villa there, and collect a dollar apiece for 'em. And then you are to go down to the grocery and get four pounds of oleomargerine, and two cans of condensed milk, five loaves of baker's bread, and ten pounds of pickled pork.

Rube. Whew! They must be a regular swell crowd. Is that all?

Phæbe. Yes; hurry.

Rube. I'm off.

[*Exit.*

Phæbe. Hey! Rube! [*Re-enters.*] There was a rat drowned in the well last night, and uncle hasn't had time to fish it out yet, so you are to haul up a barrel of fresh water from the frog pond.

Rube. All right.

[*Exit.*

Phæbe. Hey! Rube! [*He re-enters.*] And buy four pounds of dried apples.

Rube. Dried apples and frog pond water—great jehosiphath! they will be a *swell* crowd.

[*Exit* RUBE R. U. E.

Phæbe. There's nothing mean about uncle Sawyer when city boarders come. He says nothing's too good for 'em, and if necessary he will sell every speck of butter and cream he can raise to buy canned raspberries and dried codfish for 'em. That's the kind of country boarding-house keeper he is.

Rube. [*Entering* R. U. E.] Say, Phæbe, all the passengers but two got out at Deacon McCusick's doughnut ranch down at the crossing.

Phæbe. Just our luck.

Rube. How about the groceries?

Phæbe. Leave out the pork, and bring two salt mackerel.

Rube. Salt mackerel and dried apples! That means two barrels of frog pond water.

[*Exit* RUBE R. U. E. *PHÆBE* to house. *Enter* U. E. as coming from stage coach, BERNARD CARROLL and SOPHOCLES SPOTT. They survey the surroundings as they come down.]

Carroll. This is the retreat, eh?

Spott. This is the spot. I have had considerable difficulty in running the game to cover, but the result shows your wisdom in leaving everything to me.

Carroll. What particulars have you obtained?

Spott. The lady is stopping at the big villa there, overlooking the lake, probably as a guest.

Carroll. Whose villa is it?

Spott. It is the summer residence of a rich New York widow, Mrs. Marrigold.

Carroll. Marrigold? A widow? Of Seventy-ninth street?

Spott. The same. Do you know her?

Carroll. O, very well. I have frequently met her in society.

[*Enter PHOEBE from house R.*

Phœbe. Good-morning, gentlemen. Were you looking for country board?

Spott. Yes, my fair Hebe.

Phœbe. Fair who?

Spott. I said Hebe.

Phœbe. What can he be talking about? My name is Phœbe, sir, not Hebe, sir. Phœbe Adams. My aunt and uncle keep this house, and I come over during the busy season to help them out.

Spott. Yes. I've heard you make that little speech before. You don't remember me, eh?

Phœbe. O, yes, now I do. You took dinner here three days ago, and asked me so many questions about the family at the villa on the lake.

Spott. Exactly. I see the villa is still there.

Phœbe. O yes, and full of people. Mrs. Marrigold's son is home from Columbia College. Then there's a beautiful widow, Mrs. Goodall, with such a lovely daughter. They seem to have settled down for the summer, from the quantity of baggage. Then there are tourists and coaching parties coming and going every day.

Carroll. You keep well posted.

Phœbe. No trouble to do that. They are a jolly lot. Not at all stuck up. They often stroll down here and chat with us. Besides, we sell Mrs. Marrigold all of our butter and cream.

Carroll and Spott. All of it?

Phæbe. O no ! no ! only just some, on days when we don't have any boarders.

Carroll and Spott. Oh ! [RUBE enters hurriedly.

Rube. Say, Phæbe, how many pounds of oleomar—[PHÆBE tries to stop him.] Well, if they haven't got the mackerel, shall I get the salt pork ?

[PHÆBE pushes him off. CARROLL and SPOTT look at each other.]

Phæbe. We have two very pleasant front rooms, gentlemen.

Carroll. I shall want one for a day or two.

Spott. And I will take the other.

Phæbe. I'll see about dinner. I think uncle must be out milking the Alderney cows, or killing some spring chickens, or maybe he may have run over to the brook to get a mess of trout. Auntie is just down in the garden picking some strawberries. [Exit PHÆBE into house.

Carroll. Strawberries and Alderney cream !

Spott. Spring chicken and brook trout ! I wonder what that hayseed meant by dried apples and salt pork ?

Carroll. We shall probably find out at dinner.

Spott. Well, I hope not.

Carroll. Now, Mr. Spott, as I shall not for the present require your services further, will you kindly let me know the amount of my indebtedness to your firm ?

Spott. The firm of Spott & Bleedem is governed in these matters entirely by results. No results, no dividends, excepting, of course, the trifling matter of incidental expenses.

Carroll. I see ! Well sir. Your firm can have no possible interest in my relations, past, present or future, with the lady whose whereabouts I employed you to learn ; therefore, you may make out your bill of incidentals.

Spott. There you wrong us. The firm of Spott & Bleedem feels an abiding interest in the success or failure of the various enterprises in which it have been engaged.

Carroll. Excuse me, sir, but this is not an enterprise, and we can have nothing in common.

Spott. There you wrong us again. One week ago to-day, you summoned me to your office to ascertain for you the whereabouts of a lady and daughter, of whom you evidently had lost track. You did not confide to me your reason for wishing to locate the lady, but on your desk was a morning *Herald*; on the open page was an advertisement heavily marked with blue pencil lines. I noted the item, and upon reaching the street I procured a copy of the paper, and cut from it the following: [*Reads.*] "Information wanted of the whereabouts of Mrs. Phillis Goodall, *nee* Merrill, daughter of Warren Merrill, banker, who died in this city in 1863. The lady, her daughter or her husband, if living, will learn something to their advantage by addressing, Texas, box 1844, New York post office." Now, see how one thing leads to another. Goodall was the name of the lady I was to locate; the mysterious advertisement, doubtless, had something to do with you summoning me. Now, the firm of Spott & Bleedem is the legitimate successor of the old and very respectable firm of Ketchem & Workem, who did business in New York from 1852 to 1870. Not a defalcation, forgery, breach of trust, bank robbery, murder, felonious assault (to say nothing of elopements and other social scandals) that occurred during those years, in or about New York, but its entire history, together with memoranda and comments upon the merits of the case, are carefully filed in our office. Turning to these files I found that in 1861 the firm of Merrill & Carroll had been wrecked by extensive forgeries, or rather by breach of trust. The culprit was named Goodall, at one time an actor, but later Merrill's secretary, and betrothed to Merrill's daughter. After this memoranda comes the letters H. U. [*Hushed up.*] Then followed copious memoranda by the firm. Would you like to hear what Ketchem & Workem thought in 1863?

Carroll. As you please.

Spott. [*Reading from Mss.*] Looks like a conspiracy—W. I. [*Watch it.*] Goodall entered the army. It transpired that he had been secretly married to Miss Merrill, at Paterson, N. J. three months before. There is an issue to this union, a daughter born April 28, 1862. Warren Merrill died in moderate circumstances, shortly after the birth of his grand-daughter. Two men are to be kept sight of in connection with this case—Philip Hawley, the bookkeeper, now going to the bad, and the junior partner, Bernard Carroll. M. I. I. [*Money in it.*]

Carroll. Quite a romantic incident.

Spott. Isn't it? I merely refer to it to show how great an interest the firm takes in the affairs of its patrons.

Carroll. Very thoughtful of you. [*Aside.*] Miserable blackmailers. [*Aloud.*] I could have saved you much trouble, and, that you may concern yourself no further, I will add that I have always taken a deep interest in this lady's welfare. I desired to call her attention to the advertisement, and to offer my services for the furtherance of her interests.

Spott. [*Grasping CARROLL'S hand effusively.*] Noble soul! How generous and unselfish! How much better this miserable world would be if there were more like you. [*x. aside.*] I'm something of a liar myself, but this man makes me feel insignificant.

Carroll. And, now, Mr. Spott, as you have had so much trouble for nothing, I shall not complain if your bill for incidentals is made out in proportion to your good intentions. We will sample the cream and brook trout, and in an hour you can be rattling merrily back to New York.

Spott. O, bless you, I'm in no hurry. It's about time for my vacation. The air here agrees with me, and the incidentals will cover it all. Don't worry. Leave everything to me. Besides, you wouldn't think of allowing me to depart without an introduction to the ladies.

Carroll. Do you imagine that I would introduce you to these ladies?

Spott. Why not? It's not necessary to advertise my name or profession. Simply a club friend whom you ran across here by accident, a guest of the Mountain House. Call me Jones, Walker, anything you like, and leave everything to me.

Carroll. You are jesting.

Spott. I was never more serious in my life. [*Goes up c.*]

Carroll. The mangy cur! My first and last experience with private detectives. [*Enter PHÆBE from house.*]

Phæbe. Dinner is ready, gentlemen.

Carroll. Thank you; I can relish a dish of strawberries and cream. [*Exit CARROLL in house.*]

Spott. Dinner? Did you say dinner? Visions of spring chicken and brook trout. [*Exit SPOTT into house R.*]

Phæbe. I wish Rube would hurry up with that mackerel; we have only three slices of pork in the house, and not a bit of canned corned beef. [*Exit PHÆBE into house.*]

[*Enter through gate L. DOROTHY followed by ARTHUR, both in tennis dresses. She is running, he chasing her. He finally captures her and tries to kiss her.*]

Dorothy. Stop it! Don't you dare to kiss me! If you do, I'll tell your mother.

Arthur. Tell my mother! You know you won't do anything of the kind.

Dorothy. Yes, I will. She told me to tell her if you didn't behave properly.

Arthur. What's the use playing if you don't intend to pay?

Dorothy. What's the use playing if I don't win?

Arthur. You proposed the game.

Dorothy. No, I didn't.

Arthur. Yes, you did.

Dorothy. Well you proposed the forfeit, and you had no right to win; you should always let the lady win; your mamma says so.

Arthur. My mamma! I wish you'd give my mamma a rest. When a fellow gets to be twenty-one, he don't want his mamma thrown at him every five minutes, particularly by young ladies.

Dorothy. And when a young lady gets to be seventeen, she don't want young men trying to kiss her on the public highway.

Arthur. I'm not too sure about that.

Dorothy. You're impertinent; your mamma said you were, and now I know it. Don't ever speak to me again. From this time forth we are strangers.

[*She flaunts up C. ARTHUR drops in seat L. RUBE HAWKINS enters C. with two parcels.*]

Rube. The only thing they had left in the store was red herrin' and soda crackers.

Dorothy. O, Mr. Hawkins, what have you got, what have you got?

Rube. Mr. Hawkins! Geehossiphat! but that sounds funny. O, I say, just call me Rube, or my clothes wont fit.

[*PHŒBE enters from house.*]

Phœbe. Will you ever get in here with those things! What did you get?

Rube. Brook trout, smoked. [*Exit RUBE into house.*]

Phœbe. Good morning, Miss Goodall.

Dorothy. Good morning, Phœbe. Miss Goodall! Miss Goodall. Please to remember that in future, Mr. Marrigold.

[*She sweeps around with a grand air.*]

Arthur. I thought we were strangers.

Dorothy. So we are. Did you have any new arrivals to-day, Phœbe?

Phœbe. Yes, two.

Dorothy. Is that all? I haven't seen the two funny gentle-

men this morning, though I've been down to the gate a dozen times looking out.

Phæbe. O, Mr. Betterton, the tragedian, and his secretary, Mr. Wallack, they went down to Baldwinsville last evening to give readings at the Baptist church; they will be back during the morning.

Dorothy. I'm so glad they haven't gone away to stay. I just love that dear old gentleman. He is so different from anyone I ever met before, and the slim man is so awfully jolly and funny. Do you know what the tragedian calls me?

Phæbe. O, yes. Sweet Violet.

Dorothy. What a strange fancy, wasn't it? And holding his finger up just like that, he said: "Now don't tell me your name, for I want to know you only as my sweet Violet," and his voice was so tender and gentle, and his smile so sweet.

Phæbe. O, he's very polite to ladies. Why, he couldn't treat me with more ceremony if I were Mrs. Marrigold herself.

Dorothy. Do you know, I think I ought not to call him an old gentleman. He isn't old, although he is bald. Why, sometimes when he smiles and brightens up, he looks ever so young and handsome.

Arthur. You seem greatly interested in these entire strangers,
Miss Goodall.

Dorothy. That is my privilege, I believe, *Mr.* Marrigold.

Phæbe. There they go! Quarrelling again. In five minutes they'll be hugging each other. Three's a crowd.

[*Exit PHÆBE in house R.*

Dorothy. O, Archie, see! What a beautiful butterfly! Let's catch it!

[*They chase about with their tennis bats, run into each other, strike out wildly, laughing and screaming. Finally capture it and run down L. They sit on the bench, examining the butterfly, their heads very close together.*]

Dorothy. Isn't it just lovely!

Arthur. It's perfectly beautiful.

[*Enter COL. TOM ALCHOSTRA at back. A large handsome man of fifty. A typical southwesterner, neatly dressed in gray. Carries a grip.*]

Colonel. [*Looking at house R.*] This looks to be more in my way. Too doggone many frills for me up at that big hotel on the hill. I never fully realized my utter insignificance until to-day. When that big cluster diamond pin, with a small blonde man behind it, sized me up, and passed me the pen, I felt that I were a worm; and when he called Mr. Front, and told him to show me to 1159, I felt that I were a Chinaman. I collared my grip and struck for low timber. Twenty-four hours in the place, and Texas would have forgotten that I ever existed. [*Sees DOROTHY and ARTHUR with their heads very close together L. Speaks very loud.*] Change cars! [*They jump up, DOROTHY screams. They run to gate L, turn and look again, then rush off through gate L.*] I don't like to interfere with people's enjoyment, but I don't see how I could have helped it in this case. The ranch seems very quiet. I shall have to take an inventory. [*Sits L. opens grip, takes out newspaper.*] Ah, here it is! [*Reads.*] "Information is wanted of the whereabouts of Mrs. Phillis Goodall, *nee* Merrill, daughter of Warren Merrill, banker, who died in this city in 1862. The lady, her daughter or her husband, if living, will learn something to their advantage by addressing Texas, box 1844, P. O. N. Y. City." Now, that looks harmless enough, but lo! the result. [*Takes out very large bundle of letters.*] Over three hundred letters from lawyers, sharpers, beggars, detectives and other dead beats. [*Opens one and reads.*] "Dear Sir: The firm of Sharp Brothers, attorneys-at-law, make a specialty of tracing heirs, etc., terms contingent." [*Reads.*] "Texas, box 1844. Can give you some valuable information, being the successors of the old firm of Ketchem & Workem. Our records of the oldest New York, New Jersey

and Connecticut families are most complete. You will consult your interests by consulting us. A word to the wise. Spott & Bleedem, private detectives, successors to Ketchem & Workem. [*Reads.*] "Texas, etc., Honored Sir: "The Society for the Regeneration of the Heathen."—Yes, of course, and three hundred others of the same sort, and every mother's son of 'em a professional dead beat. But here's one that has the ring of sincerity. [*Reads.*] "Texas, N. Y., P. O. box 1844. Replying to your advertisement, I have to say that the writer is Phillis Goodall, daughter of the late Warren Merrill, banker. My husband, William Goodall, entered the Federal army in 1861, since which time I have not seen or heard of him. Our daughter, born after my husband's enlistment, is now with me, aged seventeen. If you have any information of my husband, I shall be glad to call upon you, with ample proofs of identity, or, should you prefer it, the enclosed card will direct you to my present address. On your arrival at Baldwinsville take coach for the Mountain House. There you can learn the location of Mrs. Marrigold's villa, where I am at present a guest. Respectfully etc., Phillis Goodall." Brief, business-like and to the point, and heah I am.

[*SPOTT enters from house. COLONEL hurriedly replaces letters, letting newspaper fall on the ground.*]

Spott. I had to come out and get a mouthful of oxygen to hold that dinner down. Spring chicken and brook trout—ugh [*Mug.*]

Colonel. I reckon I will see what the chances are for grub. [*Starts R. Meets SPOTT. They eye each other.*] I've seen that befo'.

Spott. I've seen him somewhere.

Colonel. Good morning, sah.

Spott. Same to you, sir. [*Aside.*] That's the Southern jay who was always hanging around the New York postoffice while I was watching box 1844.

Colonel. [*Aside.*] That's the fellow who was always hanging around the postoffice when I went fo' my letters.

Spott. Fine day, sir.

Colonel. Beautiful, sah, beautiful.

Spott. Stranger in these parts?

Colonel. To a certain extent, sah, yes, sah.

Spott. Like myself, sir, just stole away from the cares of business for a breath of fresh air?

Colonel. My own case, sah, exactly, sah.

[*An awkward pause.*]

Spott. Fine day.

Colonel. Yes, sah, you said that befo', sah.

Spott. Did I? I believe I did. [*Aside.*] It's the same man, sure.

Colonel. [*Aside.*] It's the same man, suah. He's a detective or a bunco steerer, much the same. [*Another pause.*]

Spott. Beautiful weather we're hav—

Colonel. That's understood, sah. What's your name, sah?
[*SPOTT starts, then recovers.*]

Spott. Walker, sir, Major Walker, New York Stock Exchange. [*Offers hand.*] And yours?

Colonel. Alchostra, sah, Colonel Tom Alchostra, of Texas.
[*Gives his hand.*]

Spott. [*Aside.*] Texas! [*Aloud.*] I'm proud to known you, sir. You are from a great State, sir.

Colonel. Thank you, sah.

Spott. Cattle King, I suppose?

Colonel. Not exactly, sah; though, like yourself, something of a stock man.

Spott. [*With an affected laugh.*] That's good, stock man, cattle king, stock broker. That's good, very good, ha, ha! [*Aside.*] He's a liar. He's a detective. [*A pause.*] It's a fine da—

Colonel. Don't say that again, sah. [*Aside.*] This fellow is a liar or a detective—the same thing. He has been following me. [*X to house R.*] [*Aloud.*] Good morning, sah; I trust we shall become better acquainted, sah.

[*Exit COLONEL TOM into house R.*]

Spott. Same to you, sir. If he is a detective, he's a new one on me. I'll take a little stroll in the garden, and see if I can find that strawberry patch.

[*Music, "Auld Lang Syne."*] GOODALL, known as BETTERTON, and PHIPPS, known as WALLACK, enter L. U. E. PHIPPS carries a champagne basket, with bits of tinselled wardrobe protruding, and swords and foils tied on top. GOODALL is dressed in dark Prince Albert coat, lavender trousers and white gaiters; Byronic collar and cuffs, hair long and in ringlets, bald on the crown; a handsome, graceful, gentlemanly man, apparently about 50, exquisitely neat, but quaint and old-fashioned, a *Palmy Day* Tragedian. He wears the G. A. R. button. WALLACK is an old-time country comedian, solemn and very respectful. GOODALL carries a bunch of wild flowers.]

Goodall. Thus far into the bowels of the land have we marched on without impediment.

[PHIPPS seated R. on basket, wiping away perspiration.]

Phipps. Without impediment! What do you call this? [*Basket.*]

Goodall. In the exhilaration of the glorious morning air, fragrant with the tonic perfumes of meadow, orchard and woodland, I have not felt the burden.

Phipps. You haven't felt it! Probably not. But I have.

Goodall. Blessed is he whose back is fitted to his burden. This castle hath a pleasant seat. Here for the nonce we will abide. This merry jaunt through shaded valleys and fragrant fields has inspired me. I shall to-day re-write the sixth act of my drama. [*He sits and take out Mss.*]

Phipps. There he goes again. The idea of a great tragedian descending to write a drama of modern rot, and actually wanting to act in it himself, he, the ideal Hamlet, the best Lear since Forrest, and the only Romeo.

Goodall. Last night, after the banquet, tendered us by the Rector, Deacons and the Mayor—

Phipps. Banquet! Ham sandwiches in the vestry.

Goodall. A new situation came to me, and before sleeping, I jotted it down. I will read you the scene.

Phipps. Some other time. I know you must be tired.

[*Aside.*] I am [*GOODALL looks at him in disgust.*]

Goodall. Upon what date did we mail the synopsis and descriptive circular of my new war drama to the New York managers?

Phipps. Just two weeks ago.

Goodall. No answer yet from Palmer?

Phipps. Not a line.

Goodall. And Daly, Frohman, French and Abbey?

Phipps. Not a line. Even Miner and Jacobs are silent.

Goodall. This is the unkindest cut of all. It is the irony of fate.

Phipps. What chance is there in the profession to-day for real actors?

Goodall. Actors! Actors! There are no actors now. Count them upon your fingers. Forrest, Eddy Davenport, Adams, Chanfrau, Hamblin, Scott, Jennings, gone! all gone! why, there are scarcely a dozen of us left.

Phipps. And the manager don't seem to know that we are here.

Goodall. When Roscius was an actor in Rome—

Phipps. Then came each actor on his ass.

Goodall. Which reminds me that I have here a letter offering me an engagement to play Uncle Tom, at Rahway, on July the Fourth. Yes, sir, this vulgar ignoramus actually asks

me to play second to a jackass. Here is his programme, with a portrait of his star. [*Exhibits a long programme of Uncle Tom, with large cut of a jackass.*] And I supported Forrest! [*Colonel Tom comes from house with Phæbe. He has a letter in his hand.*]

Phæbe. I hope you found the room pleasant, sir.

Colonel. O, yes, Miss, quite to my liking. Mrs. Marrigold's Villa is there, you say?

Phæbe. Yes, sir, that is her park, and gatekeeper's lodge.

Colonel. I should like to send a note to the house.

Phæbe. Certainly, sir. Here, Rube! Hey, Rube! [*RUBE comes from house.*] This gentlemen wants you to take a letter to Mrs. Marrigold's.

Rube. Yes, sir. Any answer, sir?

Colonel. Ask the lady.

Rube. Yes, sir.

[*Takes letter and starts L. reading address aloud, "Mrs. Phillis Goodall, care Mrs. Marrigold, Marrigold Villa." He falls over his feet and stumbles off through the gate L.*]

Phæbe. O, Mr. Betterton, I didn't know that you had returned; I expected you up on the stage.

Goodall. All the world's a stage. Why should we be jostled over dusty roads in a plebeian spring wagon, when walking is a nobler exercise.

Phipps. Yes, and much more appetizing.

Phæbe. Colonel Alchostra, this is Mr. Betterton, the famous tragedian.

Colonel. [*Offering hand.*] I admire your noble art, sir, and esteem it an honor to know one of its most gifted exponents.

Goodall. Your praise outruns my poor deserving, sir. Permit me to present my secretary and fellow artist, Burton Wallack. A man he is of honesty and trust.

Colonel. [*x'ing, takes his hand.*] I esteem this a great privilege, sah.

Phipps. I am your poor servant, ever, sir.

Colonel. [*Aside.*] A most interesting pair, certainly.

[*COLONEL goes up C. and L. looking off gate.*

Phæbe. [*To GOODALL.*] I have saved two nice spring chickens and some strawberries for you, but I had to hide 'em in the wood shed to keep 'em.

Goodall. Your pains are registered when every day I turn the leaf to read.

Phæbe. How I do love to hear him talk.

Goodall. How are you progressing with the part of Willie Hammond?

Phæbe. O, I know all of the speeches now, but the cues are what bother me most. Are you sure that I can do it?

Goodall. Positive; why, you will be an ideal soubrette.

Phæbe. Rube and I were going over the scenes together last evening in the parlor, when Uncle came in and caught us. O the stories we had to tell. I'll tell the cook to prepare your dinner.

[*Exit PHÆBE to house.*

Goodall. Excellent wench.

[*PHIPPS L. has picked up paper dropped by COLONEL ALCHOSTRA. He glances at it carefully, sees the marked advertisement, looks again, gets his glasses on, and reads intently.*]

Goodall. [*To COLONEL ALCHOSTRA.*] You will excuse me, sir; I see my morning ramble has been fruitful in the accumulation of dust.

[*Bows politely and enters house L.*

Colonel. [*Coming down C.*] I like these gentlemen. They are about the first I have met since I got to New York who do not appear like suspicious characters.

Phipps. [*Staring at paper.*] I wonder what it can mean. [*Reads disjointedly.*] Phillis Goodall, daughter of Merrill, banker—information wanted—and marked in blue pencil, box 1844. I can't be dreaming this. [*Takes a pin from his coat, sticks it in his leg, jumped up.*] No, sir; I'm wide awake.

Colonel. Ah, Mr. Wallack. I suppose you have sought this quiet retreat for a much-needed rest after a season of continuous mental endeavor.

Phipps. Exactly, sir. Is this your paper, sir? I found it lying here.

Colonel. [*Taking and examining it.*] Yes, sah. I must have dropped it.

Phipps. May I ask, sir, if you marked that advertisement in blue pencil?

Colonel. I did, sah.

Phipps. Of course its none of my business, sir; but did you mark it for any particular reason?

Colonel. [*Aside.*] These men are old actors. Possibly knew Goodall. [*Aloud.*] I inserted that advertisement.

Phipps. You did?

Colonel. I did, sah. I take it, sah, that you have been many years in your profession, sir. Possibly you were actors befo' the wah.

Phipps. Yes, sir; we were.

Colonel. In the metropolis, sah, or in the provincial cities?

Phipps. Right in New York, sir. We've not always been barnstormers, sir. I never amounted to much as an actor myself, sir. I was prompter, stage manager and all-round utility, but my companion was a famous leading man when the war broke out, and New York was at his feet. He was a mere lad of twenty-six, and the present generation of theatre-goers don't know him. But you ask any old time New Yorker if he remembers Billy Goodall.

Colonel. [*Jumping up.*] Goodall!

Phipps. [*Jumping up.*] Eh, who said anything about Goodall?

Colonel. You did, sah.

Phipps. Well, then I didn't mean it. I must have been dreaming.

Colonel. Sit down, sah. No harm is done; possibly much good.

Phipps. [*Aside.*] O, what have I said? what have I done?

Colonel. No harm, sah, no harm at all. If, in an unguarded moment, you have said anything which you regret or wish to recall, on the honah of a Texan and a soldier, I did not heah it, sah.

Phipps. [*Taking his hand.*] I thank you, sir.

Colonel. Of this rest assured. I am the bearer of joyful tidings to William Goodall, if he's living; to his wife and daughter, if he is dead.

Phipps. His daughter?

Colonel. Yes, sah. His wife or widow, and his daughter.

Phipps. And you have sought him here?

Colonel. No, sah. I have sought the lady and her daughter here.

Phipps. Here,? here?

Colonel. Yes, sah, heah. They are at present guests at yonder villa, sah.

Phipps. Then your meeting with us is purely accidental?

Colonel. Purely, sah. I assure you.

[PHIPPS takes a pin from his coat and jabs it in his leg. Winces.

Then jabs it in COLONEL A's leg. COLONEL jumps up with a cry. PHIPPS jumps up.]

Phipps. Excuse me, sir, but I wanted to make sure that it wasn't a dream.

Colonel. Yes, sah, of course, sah, quite right, sah. [*Rubs his leg*]

Phipps. And after all these years I have betrayed my friend and benefactor.

Colonel. Betrayed! Say rather rescued, sah, saved.

Phipps. You don't know the man, sir. He entered the army under a cloud, using a fictitious name. His young wife, whom he worshipped, forsook him for her father at a terrible

moment. Why, if he dreamed that she was near him at this moment he would strike out for Jackass Gulch or the Red Dog Canon within an hour.

Colonel. Then he must not know it, and they must be brought together by strategy.

Phipps. Do you think it can be done?

Colonel. Your friend is dear to you?

Phipps. Dearer than my own life, sir. He took me, a friendless, hungry gamin, from the slums of the old Bowery, and made a man of me. I was his dresser, then call boy, prompter, stage manager, and when he entered the army I followed him. I saw him rise from a private soldier to a full colonel of cavalry; and when the end came, the actor, who by his genius had swayed the hearts of thousands, and the dashing soldier, who, upon twenty fields had sought death, only to gain promotion, both passed from the public eye, both were lost in Betterton, the wandering son of Thespia. Do you wonder, sir, that I am attached to him?

Colonel. No, sah. The sentiment does credit to your head and heart.

Phipps. I don't know why I have spoken so freely to you, sir. I seem to have been impelled by a power beyond my control.

Colonel. It was instinct, sah—the great voice of nature, that, pleading in our hearts, guides us aright, when reason is at fault.

Phipps. I know you won't abuse my confidence.

Colonel. [*Giving his hand.*] Mr. Betterton shall never know from me that you have revealed his story. I shall win his confidence.

Phipps. I hope you may, sir. He is very approachable. He loves to talk of his art with educated men, and of his army life. But if you go back of '61, he will draw himself into his shell, and pull the shell in after him. [*They move R.*]

Colonel. I will find a way to draw him out again, sah.
[*COLONEL and PHIPPS enter house R. Enter through gate L.*
MRS. MARRIGOLD, PHILLIS, DOROTHY, ARTHUR and RUBE.]

Mrs. Marrigold. Did you say the gentleman was stopping here?

Rube. Yes'm, just arrived. Won't you come in?

Mrs. Marrigold. No, thank you, the gentleman is likely at dinner. We will stroll down to the post-office, and stop on our return.

Rube. Yes'm. I'll tell him so.

[*RUBE enters house R., falling over his feet.*

Dorothy. I wonder if Mr. Betterton has got back?

Arthur. Yes. Rube told me he had just arrived.

Dorothy. I wish he would come out so mamma could see him just for a minute.

Mrs. Marrigold. Why, Phillis dear, you're as pale as a ghost.

Phillis. Am I, dear? After all, it's not strange when you consider the mysterious character of this advertisement, coming after so many years.

Mrs. Marrigold. It is strange, dear. But it can't be anything very tragic. Probably the lawyers have discovered some means by which they hope to get a good fee out of you.

Phillis. I hope it's nothing more serious. But I somehow fancy that it is some part of a scheme of Bernard Carroll's.

Mrs. Marrigold. I don't see what *more* he could hope to gain.

Phillis. He has continuously annoyed me with his attentions. About two years ago I escaped them by renting my city house and taking quiet lodgings near Dorothy's school.

Mrs. Marrigold. Well, you're safe for this summer, for I propose to keep you here until October at least. We really haven't had a good long visit since we left school, and here we are widows, with a great big boy and girl, old enough, and just foolish enough to fall in love.

Phillis. You will find me a willing captive, Madge, dear.

Mrs. Marrigold. But I won't have any long faces about me. Life is too short. You've got to romp and laugh and sing and brace up and be a girl again.

Phillis. One can't well help being cheerful about you.

Mrs. Marrigold. Cheerful! that's not enough. You must be jolly. Why, at school you were the incarnation of fun and mischief, just like that vixen, Dorothy, is now.

Phillis. But, Madge, dear, we are no longer girls.

Mrs. Marrigold. We are just what we make ourselves. You want a new romance. Why you're only thirty-six. Don't chill every man who looks at you tenderly. Women were created to love and to be loved, and the heart that loves never grows old.

Phillis. Then mine shall be ever youthful and ever green. [Putting her arms about MRS. MARRIGOLD.] For I love you. I love my sweet, mischievous daughter, and I love the memory of William Goodall.

[They go up c. DOROTHY and ARTHUR are seated on steps of house R.]

Mrs. Marrigold. [Turning at back.] Come along, children.

[Exit PHILLIS and MRS. MARRIGOLD.]

Dorothy and Arthur. Children! [X L.]

[Jump up, both look disgusted. BETTERTON appears on veranda of house just at PHILLIS'S exit. ARTHUR and DOROTHY go out L. BETTERTON has a bunch of wild flowers. DOROTHY and ARTHUR run to greet him, and then advance c on each side of him, taking his hands.]

Dorothy. O, Mr. Betterton! we are so glad you have returned. Yesterday seemed so long and lonesome after you left.

Goodall. My sweet violet; you would not flatter a poor citizen?

Dorothy. O, no, indeed.

[GOODALL sits L, the young people on the ground at his feet.

Dorothy. I wish you had come just a moment sooner. Mrs. Marrigold and my mamma were here.

Goodall. Indeed?

Dorothy. Yes, they have just walked down to the post-office.

Arthur. But they will be back in a few minutes.

Goodall. As I wandered through the meadows this morning, I plucked these wild flowers.

Dorothy. For me? O, how sweet and beautiful!

Goodall. Can you read their language?

Dorothy. O, yes, sir.

Goodall. There is a violet. The symbol of sweetness, purity and modesty; may it always become you as now. [*He puts violets in her hair.*] Here's a sprig of rosemary.

Dorothy. That's for remembrance.

Goodall. And here a pansy.

Dorothy. A pansy! That's for thought. Thought and remembrance fitted.

Goodall. Ah! I see you read Shakespeare, too.

Dorothy. O, yes, sir. Mamma read all of the plays of Shakespeare to me, as soon as I was old enough to understand them.

Goodall. A wise and thoughtful mother. And you attend the theatre?

Dorothy. O, yes, very often, with my teachers and school mates. But mamma never goes. I don't know why. Yet, once she told me that my papa had been a famous actor when a very young man before their marriage. Then he became a soldier and was killed.

Goodall. Poor child.

Dorothy. I presume that's why mamma never goes.

Arthur. Not a bit like my mother. She takes in anything, and so do I. And we know lots of mighty nice people in the profession, and mother often has 'em up to the house to dinner.

Dorothy. Isn't it strange that neither of us has seen Mr. Betterton on the stage? How I should love to see you play Hamlet. Do you think you will play it in New York soon?

Goodall. [After a pause.] Possibly.

[He hangs his head thoughtfully.]

Arthur. Now is a good time; ask him now.

Dorothy. I don't like to.

Arthur. Go on! He won't be annoyed by anything you say.

Dorothy. Mr. Betterton do you ever give—that is—I mean do you some times take part in private theatricals?

Arthur. No, she means do you ever give entertainments at private residences?

Dorothy. Yes, that's it.

Goodall. Frequently. The art of entertaining, or endeavoring to do so, is my profession, and I have pursued it in the noblest temples of Thespis, in the candle lit barns of the western hamlet, in the humble dining-room of the mining camp hotel, and in the elegant drawing-rooms of the rich devotees of fashion.

Dorothy. O, I'm so glad. To-morrow will be Arthur's—I mean Mr. Marrigold's—twenty-first birthday, and his mamma is going to give him a party.

Arthur. Mamma! A party! O, come off! Don't make me a kid when I'm old enough to vote. I'm going to have a big blow-out.

Dorothy. Yes, there's an orchestra to come up from Nashua, so that we can dance in the evening.

Arthur. And a swell dinner, with everybody in full dress togs. Lots of my Columbia chums are coming up.

Dorothy. And if we could just have a nice little play to wind up with.

Goodall. Nothing easier. I had arranged to play to-morrow night at Baldwinsville, for the benefit of the Reformed

Drunkards' Association, a drama called "Ten Nights in a Bar-room," assisted by local talent. But, unfortunately, the lady who was to play little Mary Morgan, the drunkard's darling child, was called to Bangor to attend the wedding of her granddaughter. So I am at liberty for the occasion.

Arthur. Well, we don't want any temperance drama to-morrow night.

Dorothy. No, indeed, some of the guests might think we were getting personal.

Goodall. An inspiration! I will enact a scene from my own new drama.

Dorothy. O, have you written a real play, all of your own, just like Shakespeare?

Goodall. [After a pause.] A real play of my own, yes; but not exactly like Shakespeare, perhaps.

Arthur. That will be jolly. Where was it first produced?

Goodall. The rivalry among New York managers for its premier is now at its height. I shall bide my time. Meantime your guests will enjoy the honor of witnessing the first representation of any of its scenes.

Dorothy. Isn't that nice?

Goodall. But one obstacle presents itself.

Dorothy. An obstacle! O, dear! What is it?

Goodall. The cast. The scene will require two ladies and three gentlemen. The gentlemen are provided for, my comedians, Mr Wallack, Mr. Hawkins and myself.

Dorothy. Mr. Hawkins?

Arthur. What, Rube? [They both laugh heartily.]

Goodall. Talent is frequently found in unexpected places. Genius is no respecter of pedigrees. I have had them in rehearsal for some time. But we sadly need an *ingenue*.

Dorothy. O, how I wish I could do it! I often played in the charades at school.

Goodall. That wish was an inspiration. Will you do it?

Dorothy. Do you think I could ?

Goodall. Think it ? I know it. You would be an ideal ingenue.

Arthur. Does this one have a granddaughter ?

Dorothy. Of course not ; what nonsense !

Goodall. But first you must secure your mother's consent.

Dorothy. That will be easily done. Mamma never denies me anything.

Goodall. I will send you the part this afternoon, and we will rehearse to-morrow at ten sharp, in the hotel parlor.

Dorothy. O, dear ! I wonder if I shall get nervous.

Goodall. [*After a pause.*] The matter of compensation.

[GOODALL looks into space. ARTHUR and DOROTHY look at each other.]

Arthur. Yes, of course—the compensation.

Dorothy. Yes, of course.

Goodall. However, 'tis but a trifling detail, which you can arrange with my manager.

Arthur and Dorothy. Your manager !

Dorothy. Oh, do you have a manager ?

Goodall. Assuredly. Mr. Wallack.

Dorothy. I thought he was your comedian ?

Arthur. I understood that he was your valet or secretary ?

Goodall. The exigencies of our art frequently call for the exercise of varied functions. Mr. Wallack's protean talents are equalled only by his manly beauty.

Dorothy. Then it's all settled ?

Goodall. When you have secured your mother's consent, yes. [COLONEL TOM and PHIPPS come from house.] For your benefit, I will read you the scene which we are to play.

[*He gets out his Mss. formally.*]

Phipps. He has a victim at last.

[GOODALL arranges his eyeglasses, assumes an attitude, raises his arm, clears his throat, etc., when PHIPPS coming forward R. coughs ; GOODALL greatly annoyed.]

Dorothy. Now, that's what I call a shame. To be interrupted at such a time. [DOROTHY and ARTHUR rise and go up c.]

Dorothy. You see Mr. Wallack about the little details, and I'll run down and tell your mamma.

Arthur. Don't say mamma.

Dorothy. She is your mamma, aint she ?

Arthur. It's not necessary for you to remind me of it every ten minutes.

Dorothy. And it's not necessary for you to snap me up as though I were a child.

Arthur. You are a child, ain't you ?

Dorothy. No, I'm not.

Arthur. What are you, then ?

Dorothy. I'm a girl.

Arthur. What's the difference ?

Dorothy. A great deal of difference.

Arthur. What is the difference ?

Dorothy. None of your business. Don't you dare to ever speak to me again. From this time forth we are strangers. [*She slaps her hat on savagely.*] Is my hat on straight ?

Arthur. [*Savagely.*] No !

Dorothy. 'Tis, too !

[*Exit DORA indignantly c. l. GOODALL is seated l. reading Mss. and using pencil on it. He is very thoughtful. ARTHUR sits on steps of house.*]

Phipps. Now is your time, sir. But don't let him try to read his play to you. It's astonishing, but all great men have these amiable weaknesses. Richelieu thought that he had written a great play. The critics said it was rot. He chopped off several of their heads, but he never forgave them.

Arthur. O, Mr. Wallack, can I speak to you on a little matter of business ?

Phipps. Certainly.

[PHIPPS goes up, joins ARTHUR; they go into house, conversing in dumb show.]

Colonel. Mr. Betterton, I salute you, sah. Do I intrude upon your meditation?

Goodall. On the contrary. If you have a half hour's leisure, I shall take pleasure in reading to you a scene from my new drama, a poor thing, sir, but my own.

Colonel. I could not think of so far taxing you.

Goodall. Believe me, sir, it will afford me pleasure.

Colonel. Some other time, in the solitude of your chamber, with nothing to distract us. [GOODALL folds up Mss.] I fancy, Mr. Betterton, that in these rural scenes you find a calm rest and recreation?

Goodall. Yes, sir. Nature is the great fountain from which we draw inspiration. The common mother, whose nurture warms the heart and invigorates the brain.

Colonel. Do you frequently visit the Metropolis, sah?

Goodall. Not professionally. I find, sir, that Shakespeare is appreciated in his simplicity only in the provincial cities. In the great centres of population the demand is for vulgar horse play. I touch upon that subject in my new drama. I will read you the scene. [He reaches for his Mss.]

Colonel. Some other time, Mr. Betterton; I prefer to hear you speak of your own experiences.

Goodall. Alas, the memories, come like shadows, so depart. I am an unwilling captive here. I love the great West, the hospitable South. But I have been a victim to that vaulting ambition that o'er-leaps itself and falls on 'tother side. Last winter, as the star of the Crummel's Tragic Aggregation, I enacted Lear and Virginus at Bilgeville, Iowa. In the audience was an elderly commercial gentleman of the Hebrew persuasion, hailing from the Metropolis. He was kind enough to compliment me highly upon my individual efforts. He was so good as to say that much of my work had reminded him of the great master,

Forrest, whom he had known and admired. He assured me that at the present time there was in the Metropolis an absolute dearth of legitimate talent; that rot ran riot at the play house; that the stages of fashionable theatres were over-run with variety acts that had grown stale in Bowery beer gardens; that dwarfs and pigmies were masquerading in the mantle of the colossal Forrest; that the devotees of Melpomene and Thalia had been driven from their temples by the adventuress and the scarlet woman. In short, said my friend, New York is hungry for a good actor; and so I came, and I have learned that New York's theatrical appetite does not crave Roman Fathers, avenging Moors or melancholy Danes.

Colonel. Yet, sah, at an earlier period in your career, possibly befo' the war, you were not unknown in the Metropolis?

Goodall. My professional career, sir, is a post-bellum one. Speaking of the war, the leading character in my new drama is a soldier. The scene is laid in New York. Time, 1861. I will read you. [Turns leaves of *Ms.*

Colonel. Now, he's off again. I will try the other way. Mr. Betterton, I see that you wear the button of the Grand Army of the Republic. [He bows.] I am a veteran, too, sir; but I fought on the other side.

[BETTERTON gives him his hand and draws him down to a seat beside himself.]

Goodall. You were born and educated South?

Colonel. Yes, sah. And my fathers befo' me, sah.

Goodall. You offered your life to a cause which you believed to be just. A good citizen could do no less, the bravest soldier could do no more. After war's fitful fever 'tis sweet for brethren to dwell together in unity and comradeship.

Colonel. You are right, sah; and once having appealed to the arbitrament of the sword, a true soldier will abide the decree of battle.

Goodall. Had we, in 1865, hung, banished or relegated to obscurity a few politicians and demagogues on both sides, leaving the healing of the wounds to the men who made them, the bitterness and rancor of succeeding years would have been unknown.

[*PHIPPS and ARTHUR enter from house. DOROTHY enters L. U. E.*]

Dorothy. [*To Arthur.*] Mamma consents! Mamma consents. O, Mr. Betterton, mamma is quite willing for me to play the part. [*COLONEL and GOODALL rise.*]

Goodall. Colonel Alchostra, I present my sweet Violet. A name bestowed by myself.

Dorothy. [*Taking COLONEL'S hand.*] Yes, sir, and he won't hear my real name for fear it might dispel a pleasant illusion,

Colonel. Indeed, I cannot blame him

Dorothy. [*Aside.*] You are the gentleman who has a message for my mamma. She is coming now, with Mrs. Marrigold. [*GOODALL X. R.*] Mr. Betterton won't you wait just a moment and meet my mamma. I have told her so much about you she will be as charmed to know you as I have been, I'm sure.

Goodall. Even the violet can flatter, without a blush. Tomorrow I shall have that honor. I'm not i' the vein to-day.

[*GOODALL goes up and joins PHIPPS and ARTHUR in conversation. COLONEL T. in C. MRS. MARRIGOLD and PHILLIS enter L. U. E., and come down R. of C.*]

Dorothy. Colonel Alchostra, this is Mrs. Marrigold, and this is my mamma. [*Retires up.*]

Colonel. Ladies, your servant.

Mrs. Marrigold. If you are the bearer of good news to my dear friend, you will find a heart-felt welcome at Marrigold Villa. [*Gives hand.*]

Colonel. [*Taking her hand.*] My deah Mrs. Marrigold, you do me too much honah; you do, indeed.

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Aside.*] A Southerner? And I do so like Southerners. [*X. to PHILLIS.*] Invite him to dinner to-morrow. [*By-play between MRS. MARRIGOLD and PHILLIS.*

Dorothy. [*To COLONEL.*] Isn't she nice?

Colonel. You have expressed my views exactly.

[*DOROTHY joins GOODALL and ARTHUR, up. COLONEL TOM X. L. to PHILLIS. MRS. MARRIGOLD X. R.*]

Colonel. Be assured, Mrs. Goodall, that I bear only good tidings to you and those dear to you.

Phillis. I shall await your pleasure, thankfully. Mrs. Marrigold hopes that you will join us at dinner to-morrow.

Colonel. I shall do myself that great honah.

Dorothy. [*Pulling GOODALL forward c.*] Please do, just for sweet Violet's sake. [*GOODALL smiles and comes reluctantly forward c., his back toward PHILLIS and COLONEL.*] Auntie Marrigold, this is Mr. Betterton, and he seems to be a regular woman hater.

Goodall. [*Smiling pleasantly.*] A woman hater? Far from it! Who could look into your face and be a woman hater? Besides there are no women haters, though many affect it.

[*He X's. to MRS. MARRIGOLD. PHILLIS, hearing the voice, partly rises, COLONEL stands so as to hide GOODALL.*] These whims and fancies come and go, but love goes on forever.

[*He takes MRS. MARRIGOLD'S hand, bowing low and very politely.*]

Phillis. [*Aside.*] Who spoke? Was it a voice from the grave?

[*GOODALL turns up c., puts his left arm over the shoulder of PHIPPS a la Hamlet and Horatio, gives his R. hand to DOROTHY, who goes up c. and joins ARTHUR c. at back, as GOODALL and PHIPPS reach the steps.*

R.

RING.

L.

GOODALL, PHIPPS,
MRS. MARRIGOLD.

DOROTHY, ARTHUR,

COLONEL,
PHILLIS.

ACT III.

Drawing rooms of MRS. MARRIGOLD'S Villa, elegantly furnished, light summer style ; 3 arches, large C., smaller R. and E. in flats (or drop) opening on veranda, overlooking landscape used in Act II. Scene boxed. Practical doors R. and L. 3 E., R. and R. and L. 1 E. Music—waltz, distant L.

[*Enter at rise, BERNARD CARROLL in full evening dress, L. 3 E.*]

Carroll. Mrs. Marrigold has certainly done the handsome thing by the youngster. I have tried in vain to interest her in my suit with Phillis. Polite in all things else, the moment I touch upon that she freezes. Can it be possible that there's an understanding between them? Of this I am sure, in some shape there is danger in the air. That advertisement has haunted me from the moment my eye fell upon it. For fifteen years the face of Philip Hawley has been my night-mare, and I feel that he is in some way connected with that advertisement. A marriage with the daughter of Warren Merrill offers me a haven of rest, or at least a vantage ground of defence should trouble come.

[*Enter SPOTT L. 3 E., drunk. His dress suit much too large, trousers hide his feet, sleeves hide his hands, coat and vest very large and baggy. CARROLL looks at him with disgust.*]

Spott. S'magnificent blow-out, couldn't have been better if they'd left everything to me. The only thing's not a success is my dress suit; it seems to get in my way. Possibly it's because I'm not accustomed to dress suits as a steady diet. [*Sees CARROLL.*] Hello! Carroll, old man, it's a howlin' success!

Carroll. See, here, Spott—

Spott. 'Scuse me, *Mr.* Carroll, Walker, Sir Major Walker, Stock Exchange.'

Carroll. I'm astonished that a man whose profession requires coolness, caution and silence, should upon such small provocation make such a consummate ass of himself.

Spott. Personal deportments 'smerely matter of 'pinion. Don't you worry, your case is safe; leave everything to me.

Carroll. Where in heaven's name did you get that dress suit?

Spott. 'Slucky catch, wasn't it? Rube Hawkins got for me from gentleman guest at the Mountain House. I didn't propose to discredit your introduction into swell society by appearing in anything but the regulation uniform. How d's strike you?

Carroll. It don't appear to strike you at all, excepting at the feet.

Spott. I flatter myself that clothes do not always make the man. It's not the custom in best circles to comment on gentlemen's personal appearance, but when you want to land on top, with both feet on terra cotta, leave everything to me.

Carroll. Have you been able to pump this Colonel Alchostra, or find out who he is?

Spott. Leave everything to me. Got him down fine. He's a chump. He's no Texas Colonel. He's a snide detective from Philadelphia. He's a lookin' for Charley Ross yet. No fear of his getting onto the racket we're working. Leave everything to me.

Carroll. I have repeatedly told you that there is no racket, and I am not working anything or anybody. Now, if you again refer to my visit here among my old and intimate friends in this vulgar manner, I shall see that Mrs. Marrigold's servants throw you out.

Spott. You wouldn't do anything so rash.

Carroll. Wouldn't I? You just provoke me a little further and see. You don't know me, sir! [*Exit CARROLL* L. 3 E.

Spott. Don't I? Don't? I know you better than your own shadow knows you. Throw me out, eh! throw me out! That's a joke. And me with the records of Ketchem & Workem at my fingers' ends. Let me see whether I know you or not?

[*Takes out memorandum book, reads brokenly:* "Merrill—Carroll, bankers; Goodall, Secretary.—*Breach of trust.*—*Bank wrecked.*—Goodall entered army '61.—*H. U. Hushed up.*—*Keep an eye on Philip Hawley, bookkeeper, now going to the bad.*—Also junior partner, Carroll.—*M. I. I. Money in it.*—*Addenda: Further developments in this case will be found in series for 1863, Vol. XIII, pages 35 to 55. B. M. Big money.*]

Don't know you, eh! My partner, Workem, was over in Paterson yesterday, making evidence for a sensational divorce case, and had the key of the safe deposit, so I couldn't get hold of that back number, but I'll have it down fine inside of thirty-six hours.

[*Enter C. PHÆBE and RUBE, each with a large bundle.*

Rube. Are you sure we was to come in this way?

Phæbe. Of course I am; Miss Dorothy said she would be on the lookout for us. [*They see SPOTT, both drop bundles and laugh.*

Spott. You seem greatly amused. 'Tis funny, ain't it? [*He laughs affectedly, stops suddenly.*] Wonder what the devil they see to laugh at? [*Music.*] Ah, there goes another waltz, and the bewitching Widow Marrigold is sighing for my return.

[*SPOTT waltzes off L, stumbles and exits.*

Rube. By geehossiphat!

Phæbe. What's the matter?

Rube. I hired two suits of the college boy waiters at Mountain House, one for the little broker and the other for the big Texas Colonel. I must have got the rooms mixed.

Phæbe. It looks as though you got the clothes mixed.

[*Enter DOROTHY L. 3 E.*

Dorothy. I saw you coming up the walk. Is that your wardrobe?

Phœbe. Yes, I suppose so. Mr. Wallack calls 'em togs.

Dorothy. You're to go in the reception room there. [R. U. E.] The library is adjoining. The gentlemen will dress there. Both rooms open on the veranda, so we can go out and come in there. You know Mr. Wallack said particularly that Mr. Betterton's entrance would be killed dead if he couldn't come in through a centre door.

[Enter L. U. E. ARTHUR, evening dress.

Arthur. Hello! Have the actors arrived?

Phœbe. Part of us.

Rube. Well, I'm *all* here myself.

Phœbe. And we wish you many happy returns of your twenty-first birthday.

Arthur. Same to you, thank you.

Rube. Yes, and Uncle Adams wanted me to kinder remind you that every young man should be careful how he casts his first vote. He is running for Road Commissioner, but of course he didn't mention it on that account, but simply on general principle like.

Arthur. Yes, of course, I understand.

Phœbe. There is nothing mean about Uncle Adams when it comes to giving advice.

Dorothy. Where is Mr. Wallack?

Rube. We left him packing Mr. Betterton's costume.

Dorothy. In the old champagne-basket?

Rube and Phœbe. Yes.

Dorothy. "The badge of all our tribe," as he calls it. Run into the library and leave your bundles.

Phœbe. All right. [Exit PHŒBE with bundles, R. 3 E.]

Rube. [Picking up bundle.] I tell you when I get into these swell togs, as Mr. Wallack calls em, I'll just bring down the house.

[RUBE stumbles and falls over bundle and through door R. 3 E.]

Dorothy. He's trying to bring down the house before the play begins.

Arthur. Well, if the people don't all fall off their seats when that big hayseed shows up I shall be astonished.

Dorothy. Don't you worry about him. Last night he was trying to back out of it, and I heard Mr. Wallack tell him that next to Mr. Betterton he would make the biggest sensation of any one.

Arthur. Well, I guess he will.

Dorothy. Dear me! I'm so nervous and anxious. Why couldn't we have the play first and let them drink their wine and play chess afterwards?

Arthur. O, that wouldn't do. We want to wind up with the farce.

Dorothy. This is not to be a farce, sir.

Arthur. We can tell better when we have seen it.

Dorothy. O dear! I suppose you think you must become blasé and cynical now that you are twenty-one. I hate people who know everything.

Arthur. O, come now, mother made me promise to begin my majority by being jolly and good-natured all day. So you can't draw me into a quarrel.

[Enter MRS. MARRIGOLD L. U. E., full evening toilet.]

Mrs. Marrigold. Are you children quarrelling again?

Dorothy. It wasn't me.

Arthur. Children! I suppose I shall never make anyone understand that I am not a child until I do something desperate. Get married, or let my hair grow, or elope with a married woman, or kill somebody.

Dorothy. Or stop smoking cigarettes.

[ARTHUR and DOROTHY quarrel in dumb show, and exit to veranda C. Enter PHILLIS L. U. E., evening toilet.]

Phillis. Why, how mysteriously you vanished, dear! Colonel Alchostra is disconsolate

Mrs. Marrigold. That disgusting Major Walker became so offensively attentive, that I withdrew to get a breath of air. Where could Mr. Carroll have found that creature?

Phillis. I will give you my opinion on that subject to-morrow.

Mrs. Marrigold. Mr. Carroll has not annoyed you?

Phillis. Not as yet.

Mrs. Marrigold. Should he do so, I want you to let me know, and I shall take pleasure in giving himself and his tipsy friend their hats.

Phillis. I shall avoid doing or saying anything to mar the evening's pleasure. But really you must return or Colonel Alchostra will do something desperate.

Mrs. Marrigold. What nonsense you do talk. Has the Colonel yet referred to the nature of his mission?

Phillis. No, dear, he has evidently become so deeply interested in another direction as to have quite forgotten it.

Mrs. Marrigold. Why how you do run on, Phillis.

Phillis. I confess to a liking for the handsome Texan. He combines the manly courteousness of a soldier with the ingenuousness of a boy.

Mrs. Marrigold. Well, I declare. The icicle melts! I shall have to warn the Colonel of his danger.

Phillis. His danger lies in quite another direction, and you will be the last to warn him.

[COLONEL TOM ALCHOSTRA enters L. 3 E. *He has on a dress suit much too small for him. Trousers very tight and short, coat very tight, sleeves too short, cuffs come below the coat sleeve and bother him continually, an occasional slight showing of his white shirt between his vest and waistband of trousers. Great care will be necessary in this make-up to be humorous without being grotesque or unduly extravagant. COLONEL ALCHOSTRA is a gentleman.*]

Colonel. Ladies, youah most obedient. Do I interrupt a private conference?

Both. O, no, no, Colonel.

Colonel. A moment since I fancied that the lights were burning low. The beautiful rooms seemed suddenly wrapped in darkness, for two of the most brilliant meteors had vanished.

Mrs. Marrigold. [*To PHILLIS.*] Now, wasn't that pretty.

Phillis. You are very complimentary, Colonel. But I am sure you will now be able to see quite distinctly with one of the bright lights; so, if you will excuse me, I will see what mischief my little girl is up to. [*Exit PHILLIS C. L.*]

Colonel. [*Solus.*] A most lovely character, truly. What a wife and daughter for a fellow to find after eighteen years of solitude. How will it end? We shall soon know. But the widow must be taken into our confidence at once.

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Solus.*] That's a most extraordinary suit of clothes the Colonel wears. It's only his good looks and innate dignity that prevent his appearing ridiculous. I suppose that's a style peculiar to Texas.

Colonel. [*Coming forward.*] My dear Mrs. Marrigold, I have sought this opportunity to speak to you upon a subject in which I am suah you will be as deeply interested as myself.

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Aside.*] Good gracious! I hope he's not going to get serious so soon. I've scarcely enjoyed a *tete-a-tete* yet, to say nothing of a flirtation. [*Aloud.*] My dear Colonel, I must of necessity feel an interest in all that concerns a guest in whose brief acquaintance I have found so much enjoyment.

Colonel. You do me too much honah, ma'am; you do, indeed.

[*MRS. MARRIGOLD sits L.*]

Mrs. Marrigold. Won't you be seated, Colonel?

[*She motions him to a seat near her. He moves quickly to take it, but his tight clothes embarrass him.*]

Colonel. Thank you, I have been seated for an hour, and I find it a positive relief to stand for a change. Ah, my deah

Mrs. Marrigold, what a charmed existence you lead surrounded by all that wealth and perfect taste can supply, with troops of friends vieing with each other to make youah hours pass pleasantly.

Mrs. Marrigold. I have, indeed, everything to be grateful for, yet I find my greatest happiness in witnessing the enjoyment of those about.

Colonel. I can see it, ma'am, in your every act. [*Tries to sit, BUS. as before. Poses against back of chair.*] And, after all, it is more blessed to give than to have it taken unbeknownst, or words to that effect.

Mrs. Marrigold. And you never married, Colonel?

Colonel. No, ma'am, so far I have escaped; so far that great happiness has been denied me. My life has been without a romance, and, excepting one little incident, without a great sorrow.

Mrs. Marrigold. Might I ask the nature of the exception, Colonel?

Colonel. Certainly. About foah yeah ago I was entertaining some gentlemen from the North on my ranch near Corsicana. One day we were hunting jack rabbits when a blamed Yankee drummer shot Brown Jessie.

Mrs. Marrigold. Great heaven! shot her! shot Brown Jessie! Was she your betrothed, Colonel?

Colonel. O, no, she was my favorite Gordon setter.

Mrs. Marrigold. O, dear! A Gordon setter! What a shame.

Colonel. Oh! You are fond of dogs.

Mrs. Marrigold. Yes, indeed! The big noble ones, setters, pointers, shepherds, St. Bernards, Newfoundlands. They are all affectionate, and their devotion is beautiful, because so unselfish.

Colonel. [*Aside.*] This lady is simply bewitching!
[*Very enthusiastically. Tries to sit beside her, BUS. as before, assumes another pose against the chair.*]

Mrs. Marrigold. I think the love of domestic animals a virtue all should cultivate.

Colonel. My views exactly. Speaking of animals, I trust you were not seriously annoyed by the attentions of Majah Walker.

Mrs. Marrigold. Somewhat. It was most thoughtful of you to come to my rescue, Colonel.

Colonel. Believe me, my dear Mrs. Marrigold, the gratification is all my own.

[COLONEL makes another effort to sit. Finally sits on the arm of the chair, which brings them much closer. Their heads are very near each other. DOROTHY enters c., sees them and pantomimes ARTHUR, who enters c. He remains at back observing.]

Mrs. Marrigold. I fear, Colonel, you find our little gatherings dull and uninteresting.

Colonel. On the contrary, my dear Mrs. Marrigold, the hours, too brief, passed in your lovely home and in your enchanting presence must ever remain an oasis in the Sahara of my life.

Mrs. Marrigold. You are given to flattery, Colonel.

Colonel. No! No! On my honah. [*Bends forward and recovers quickly.*] I could not stoop to flattery.

Mrs. Marrigold. And you are quite sure that you mean *all* that you say?

Colonel. Every word, and moah, much moah; the tail goes with the hide.

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Aside.*] Good gracious! What odd sayings those Texans have.

Colonel. [*Bending forward.*] Oh, my dear Mrs. Marrigold. If I dared to indulge the hope that I might some day——

Dorothy and Arthur. Change kears!

[DOROTHY and ARTHUR run off quickly. MRS. MARRIGOLD and COLONEL jump up.]

Mrs. Marrigold. What was that?

Colonel. I distinctly heard some one say, change kears!

Mrs. Marrigold. And that reminds me, Colonel, that you had something important to speak of.

Colonel. Much. Pray, be seated. The delight of finding myself alone with you made me foah a time forget why I sought you. It is in relation to this actor, Mr. Betterton, who is to honah us this evening. Had I known of your design I should have urged you not to have brought him heah just at this time; but since it is now to late to retreat, it becomes necessary to let you into a secret.

Mrs. Marrigold. A secret! I just love secrets!

Colonel. [*Aside.*] Why was I not born a secret!

Mrs. Marrigold. Eh?

Colonel. Then, my dear Mrs. Marrigold, you must know that Mr. Betterton—[*WALLACK enters c. carrying champagne-basket. Swords on top, &c. He advances R.*] who is to appear befoah us this evening is none other than——

Wallack. [*Coughs.*] Excuse me, but I was not sure whether I had made a mistake.

Mrs. Marrigold. O, no, Mr. Wallack; you are quite right. The library and reception rooms [*points R.*] will be used as dressing rooms. Make yourself entirely at home.

Wallack. Thank you, ma'am. If not presuming, I should like a moment's conversation with Colonel Alchostra.

Mrs. Marrigold. Most certainly.

Colonel. Allow me to conduct you to the doah. [*She takes his arm.*] Allow me to tote youah fan. [*He escorts her ceremoniously to door L. I. E., bows very low, hands her fan, and, as she takes it, kisses her hand gallantly. Exit MRS. MARRIGOLD, L. I. E.*]

Colonel. Now, Mr. Wallack.

Wallack. Colonel, I'm getting terribly nervous, as the time approaches. Mr. Betterton has been morose and gloomy all

day. An unusual thing. He is very pale and has eaten nothing. He is not well, and I fear the terrible shock of this meeting will be too much for him.

Colonel. Nonsense, my deah fellow; men do not die from excess of joy.

Wallack. I know him better than you do, sir. He is nervous and sensitive. He carries two Confederate bullets in his shoulder and thigh, and an ugly sabre cut in the left side. He has had to give up playing Richard and Macbeth, on account of the excitement of the combats. Last winter he was playing *The Stranger*, one night in Rogersville, Iowa. The story is similar to his own history. He was completely absorbed in the character, and when he was introduced to Mrs. Haller and recognized his own wife, instead of making an exit L. 1. E., he stiffened up, turned ghastly white and fell to the floor in a heap. The old sabre cut broke open, he had a raging fever for three weeks, and was as crazy as a loon. It was a close call. He hasn't the least fear of death, but lives in mortal terror of again losing his mind.

Colonel. Your concern does credit to your head and heart, Mr. Wallack, but I feel confident that the *denouement* will be a bright and not a tragic one.

Wallack. I hope so, sir. But this absurd play that he has written is in some respects a reflex of incidents of his own life touched up with flights of imagination. That's what makes me fear a sudden meeting. Have you yet arranged how they are to meet?

Colonel. No. I shall explain all to Mrs. Marrigold and trust her woman's wit. Excuse me, Mr. Wallack, and I will attend to it at once. [Exit COLONEL ALCHOSTRA L. 3 E.]

Wallack. [Seated at basket.] Well, if this comedy don't end in a tragedy I shall be thankful.

[DOROTHY, PHÆBE, RUBE and ARTHUR all enter from points of last exit, and gather about Wallack, all talking at once.]

All. O, Mr. Wallack, we've been waiting for you.

Phæbe. If I'm to play the mother of a young lady, I ought to have white hair.

Wallack. Nonsense! Stage mothers never grow old. You just study the art of making yourself look young, if you want to act. Nature will attend to the wrinkles and white hairs sooner than you'll like.

Rube. I know doggone well I can't get my legs into them gol-darned yellow plush breeches.

Wallack. I know better. I've worn 'em a hundred times.

Rube. You've worn 'em? Well, that's different.

Dorothy. O, Mr. Wallack, I've got such a lovely dress, one of my commencement dresses. Mamma and Mrs. Marrigold sat up nearly all night fixing it over for me. Do you think I'll remember what I have to say?

Phæbe. Are you sure I won't forget my verses?

Rube. Well, you just tell me when it's time for me to come out, and I'll be all right—if I don't forget the things I have to say.

Arthur. I'd like to be the manager of that company. Haven't you got a part for me?

Wallack. Yes, you might set the stage.

All. Set the stage?

Wallack. Yes, arrange the furniture and carry off the dead.

All. O, yes, of course.

Dorothy. That'll just suit him. [All laugh at ARTHUR.]

Dorothy. Now, what do we want first?

Wallack. Chairs.

All. Chairs! [All rush off, each at different entrance.]

Wallack. Well, there was an exit for a farce comedy.

[All re-enter, each with a chair.]

All. Chairs!

[*They bang the chairs down, hitting RUBE's feet.*

Rube. Geehosiphat! Do you suppose the whole audience want to sit on my feet?

Dorothy. Well, they must sit somewhere, musn't they?

[*All laugh at RUBE.*

Wallack. Now then arrange them in that end of the room.

[*They arrange chairs R. and L. well down to curtain line, leaving C. open.*]

Wallack. Now wait till I get the flag.

All. The flag!

Wallack. Certainly. This is a military drama, and we want banners, guns, swords, and all the gorgeous panoply of war.

[*He takes flags from basket and drapes them over chairs R. and L.*]

Dorothy. O, dear!

All. What is it?

Dorothy. We ought to have a cannon.

All. A cannon!

Arthur. Sure enough. Who's got a cannon?

Dorothy. I know! I know where there's one.

All. Where?

Dorothy. Don't you remember the great big brass cannon sticking in the ground by the soldiers' monument, down in the cemetery? Rube, you run down and get it.

[*All look at RUBE.*

Rube. Say, this thing's gone far enough. I'm engaged to act out an old family servant on the stage, and not to rob cemeteries.

Dorothy. O, you're too particular, ain't he Mr. Wallack?

Wallack. Altogether, there's nothing unreasonable about it, the woods are full of graveyard comedians.

Arthur. That's so. They have a couple of 'em in all of the comic operas.

Wallack. Here are the music cues.

[*Produces roll of paper.*]

All. Music cues!

Dorothy. Do we have music in the play?

Wallack. Do we? Do you suppose Mr. Betterton could make an entrance without music? There is an orchestra, of course.

Dorothy. O yes, they are playing for the dancers now.

Arthur. I'll take them in and explain to them.

[*ARTHUR exits L. 3 E. taking paper from WALLACK. Enter L. I. E. MRS. MARRIGOLD.*]

Mrs. Marrigold. Come now, scamper and get ready for your play. There's a gentleman coming who must not see you here.

[*PHOEBE, RUBE and WALLOCK exit R. 3. E. WALLACK taking basket.*]

Dorothy. Who is coming, Auntie?

Mrs. Marrigold. Mr. Betterton. I made him promise to come in time for a little visit before the play. I was interested in him.

Dorothy. Of course you were. You couldn't help being. No more could I. I just love to be near him. He is so gentle and sweet, and so polished and talks so beautifully I could sit at his feet for hours and listen.

MUSIC—Auld Lang Syne. Enter C. L. MR. GOODALL, in full evening toilet. Neat and fashionable, but eccentric, Byronic collar, cuffs rolled back over coat sleeves. He passes his hat and coat to SERVANT who follows him. SERVANT exits R. 3 E. DOROTHY runs to meet him. He advances, holding her hand.

Mrs. Marrigold. You are most kind to favor us, Mr. Betterton, though we had hoped for your pleasure at dinner.

Goodall. Most gracious of you. But I seldom dine preceding my professional labors. My sweet Violet! The sight of that bright face should inspire us all.

Dorothy. I shall be happy if I don't spoil your scene.

Goodall. I do not fear it. I observed you closely at rehearsal to-day. You have sincerity and enthusiasm added to the dramatic instinct. These qualities combined constitute that mysterious entity sometimes called genius. Only this, don't *act*. Be yourself, your sweet, ingenuous self.

Dorothy. I'll try, sir.

Goodall. No, don't try. You will not act the scene, you will live it. [DOROTHY runs off R. 3 E.]

Mrs. Marrigold. Won't you be seated, Mr. Betterton?

Goodall. Thank you. [Sits R. C.]

Mrs. Marrigold. I fear you will regret that our young folks found out your quiet retreat.

Goodall. On the contrary, I love young people, and these have been most delightful chums. Your son is a noble fellow, who will, I trust, bring honor to your name, and his sweet companion has shone in upon my quiet life like a ray of blessed sun-light. She is *sui generis*.

Mrs. Marrigold. She is, indeed, a most lovable child. Her father, who was killed during the rebellion, had been at one time a member of your profession.

Goodall. So I learned from her yesterday. It makes her doubly interesting to me, for I have been a son of Mars, as well as Thespis, in my time.

Mrs. Marrigold. True! You had the courage to become a soldier, and yet you remained a bachelor. How unkind to our sex.

Goodall. The meanest coward must die. It is the inevitable. But knowingly to march to the altar requires the courage of a lion.

Mrs. Marrigold. Now you are quoting, and not responsible for the sentiment. I have observed, Mr. Betterton, that the greatest triumphs of the greatest artists have been achieved after love came to inspire them.

Goodall. In more serious vein, I frankly agree with you, that mysterious power can raise us to the clouds or crush us to the earth. It inspires us to our noblest efforts, or tempts us to dishonor and disgrace, according to the strength or weakness of our character. True love is at once the foundation and the coping stone of every perfect life.

Mrs. Marrigold. Now the *man* speaks, not the actor.

Goodall. True. I seldom speak of myself; the subject, at best, is uninteresting. But it is the breathing time of day with me, and something in your gracious manner invites me.

Mrs. Marrigold. I beg that for the time you will forget the professional character of your visit, Mr. Betterton, and remember only that you are my guest, my honored guest.

[*She offers her hand, which GOODALL takes with great politeness.*]

Goodall. I thank you. (*A pause.*) What poor weak creatures we strong men are. In our egotism, miscalled pride, we gird ourselves about with an impenetrable armor of secrecy. For years we stride the earth nursing our real or fancied griefs or wrongs. The past a grave of buried hopes, the present a fight with our better natures, the future an unmarked grave. And in our selfish solitude we cry, youth is a hope, manhood a struggle, age a regret.

Mrs. Marrigold. But some day the awakening comes!

Goodall. Yes; some day a gentle hand touches our panoply of steel, and lo! it crumbles at our feet, and we stand revealed in all our poverty of pride. And then the voice of nature cries aloud within us, Give me to drink! Give me to drink from the fountain of human sympathy, ere I sink unknown by the way side.

Mrs. Marrigold. This strange man has a history.

Goodall. It is not so many years, for I am but forty-five, since I was a so-called popular idol. Men of note delighted to honor me, fair women courted me and blushing maidens haunted me with their autograph albums. Then the cry of war went abroad through the land. I saw friends and associates rushing to arms. The cry of Mars drowned the pleading voice of Thespia. And then a greater power than either came to shape my destiny. That subtle spell that makes kings of serfs and serfs of kings had fallen upon me. I felt the hallowed joy that comes with a chaste woman's love.

Mrs. Marrigold. And once more history repeated itself, and Venus conquered Mars. You won her?

Goodall. Yes, I won her, and in a few brief months I lost her.

Mrs. Marrigold. So soon! A few months! [*Aside*] How much his story resembles that of dear Phillis. [*Aloud.*] How you must have suffered.

Goodall. Suffered! I did. I sought oblivion upon the battle-field. Death became desired as Daphne by the eager Day God. Like him I chased the nymph to grasp the laurel. I could not even die. And when the fratricidal struggle ended, Thespia wooed me back again. Possibly had I returned with Fox to the old Bowery, I might have kept more nearly abreast the times. But I had mingled with the rough-handed, warm-hearted men of the West and South. I had fought them on many fields and slept beside them at many camp-fires, and so I linked my fate with theirs. I became, in short, what the more favored members of our guild are pleased to call a barn-stormer.

Mrs. Marrigold. But you occasionally visit the Metropolis?

Goodall. Seldom—professionally. Acting in the Metropolis is one of the luxuries, to be indulged in only by the rich, the speculative or the lucky. Being none of these, I am content

to strut my brief hour where my poor efforts still touch a responsive chord. They cannot always welcome me in gilded temples, but from the rough benches their big human hearts go out to the Master's noble thoughts, and so for a time linger with the poor player, striving in his weak way to give them form and pressure. I do not miss the glaring lights or gilded domes, for in those brief hours the dusky Moor lives again in Venice and Cyprus. And in Hamlet's inky cloak I feel again the nipping and eager air upon the platform where Bernardo watched, or wander in feigned madness through the stately halls of Elsinore.

Mrs. Marrigold. And so you are content with your lot?

Goodall. Perfectly. Community of thought is superior to geographical lines. The hours in which I live with Shakespeare are not passed in Oshkosh or Grass Valley.

Mrs. Marrigold. I must thank you for a most delightful half hour. It is so natural for those who have not achieved distinction to rail at the world, and regard themselves as neglected geniuses.

Goodall. We all receive what it is good for us to have, either in reward or chastisement. There is a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow, and, in erring reasons spite, this truth is manifest, whatever is—is right.

[*Enter COLONEL ALCHOISTRA, L. 3 E.*

Colonel. With my usual stupidity or ill-luck, I have interrupted a *tete-a-tete*.

Mrs. Marrigold. O, no, Colonel. [*GOODALL bows and saunters about, looking up pictures, etc.*] Mr. Betterton has been entertaining me most delightfully.

Colonel. Then you like my quaint friend?

Mrs. Marrigold. He is a most interesting character. Frankly, Colonel, I expected to be amused by an actor's eccentricities. I have been entertained by a gentleman's conversation.

Colonel. In fact, you came to scoff, and you remained to apologize for barking up the wrong tree, or words to that effect.

Mrs. Marrigold. Precisely.

Colonel. Which brings me to the subject for which I have been seeking you. As I said before, it is a secret.

[GOODALL sits in background and takes out and reads his *Mss.*]

The peculiar combination of circumstances which have resulted in bringing this gentleman under your roof at this critical moment render it necessary for me to confide to you a secret which I had hoped to reveal at a time and place of my own selection, and under circumstances which I might deem for the best interests of all concerned.

Mrs. Marrigold. Good gracious, Colonel! How long you are coming to the secret. What is that about procrastination being the thief of time?

Colonel. Quite right, my dear Mrs. Marrigold. Procrastination is the root of all evil, or words to that effect. I remember some years ago I had a very dear friend, Majah Bragg, of San Antonio. The Majah was a victim of the terrible habit of procrastination. He was engaged to a most charming young lady, Miss—Miss—

Mrs. Marrigold. O, never mind the name, Colonel.

Colonel. I don't seem to mind it just now. However, the Majah couldn't seem to find time to marry the young lady, and one beautiful morning while the Majah was trying to make up his mind, the young lady married one of the Majah's particular friends.

Mrs. Marrigold. Of course, the Major shot the man?

Colonel. Well, not exactly; he said it was his intention to do so, but he somehow never got around to it; force of habit you see, force of habit.

Mrs. Marrigold. Will he ever come to that secret?

Colonel. I said to him one day, Majah says I, some day the angel Gabriel will toot his horn for you, and you won't be ready, and sho enough he did.

Mrs. Marrigold. Did what?

Colonel. Blow his trumpet.

Mrs. Marrigold. Who, the Major?

Colonel. No, ma'am, the angel Gabriel.

Mrs. Marrigold. O, then the Major is dead!

Colonel. O, no. He wasn't ready. He's living down thar in San Antonio yet, I reckon.

[GOODALL comes forward with Mss.]

Goodall. I thought it possible you might be interested in a trifle I have here.

Mrs. Marrigold. We cannot fail to be interested, Mr. Betterton. [*Aside.*] I wonder if I shall ever learn that secret.

Goodall. It is an act from my last drama. A poor thing, sir, but my own. But I shall bore you.

Both. O, no! no!

Goodall. [*Ceremoniously.*] This might be called a military drama, the incident being connected with our great internecine struggle. I will read the scene which I propose to present for your approval this evening. I will premise with a brief outline of the plot. Through some cause, a young husband and wife have quarreled during their honeymoon. The wife is proud and silent, the husband sullen and unrelenting, and so they part. The great world swallows him. The young wife bears her absent husband a lovely daughter. Ten years have passed, when for the first time she hears of the absent one. A terrible war is raging throughout the land. The papers contain accounts of the achievements of a daring soldier from the far West. His portrait is in every window. It is the long-silent husband and father. She follows his brilliant career through five weary years of war. The end has come, peace has been proclaimed. The conquering army returns to greet

the loved ones at home. Through the densely crowded streets, spanned with triumphal arches, he rides proudly at the head of his regiment of cavalry. [WALLACK enters R. 3 E. Comes down slowly.] His daughter, now a lovely girl of fifteen, recognizes her father by portraits she has seen. The wife is weeping in the solitude of her chamber. Then comes the scene which I will now read to you.

[He spreads his Mss. ceremoniously, clears his throat, raises his arm for an impressive gesture—when WALLACK coughs.]

Wallack. [Coughing.] [GOODALL greatly disgusted, COLONEL and MRS. MARRIGOLD annoyed.] Pardon me, Colonel Berton, but it lacks only fifteen minutes of curtain time.

Goodall. [Rising.] True. I must beg you to excuse me, Mrs. Marrigold.

Mrs. Marrigold. I am sorry to have missed your reading of the scene, but a story so full of human interest and so graphically told, cannot fail of success.

Goodall. The lot of the poor dramatist were, indeed, a happy one had all his critics natures as sympathetic and responsive as your own.

[He presses her hand politely. Bows to COLONEL A, goes up to door R. followed by WALLACK. Exit R. 3 E. GOODALL and WALLACK.]

Mrs. Marrigold. Now, then, I shall learn the secret. Now, Colonel, since we are alone again, haven't you forgotten something?

Colonel. Possibly; who could blame me, if, in this blissful atmosphere, I forgot everything but your presence.

Mrs. Marrigold. [Aside.] Now that was really pretty; indeed, it would have been beautiful if his clothes only fitted him a little better. [Aloud.] But, Colonel, can it be possible that you have forgotten the secret?

Colonel. Oh! 'The secret! [*He starts suddenly, tries to sit but stops, and bends forward, holding on back of her chair.*] Pray, pardon my stupidity, Mrs. Marrigold, the secret is this: [*He looks cautiously about room and then whispers in her ear, gesticulating to indicate GOODALL. Her face expresses great astonishment.*]

Mrs. Marrigold. You can't mean it! Mr. Betterton the husband of——

Colonel. 'Sh! even the walls must not hear it. [*He whispers her again. They continue a pantomimic conversation. SPOTT enters, still tipsy.*]

Spott. 'Smagnificent blow-out. Wish some one would have a birthday every day, and leave everything to me. I think I've made an impression on the lovely widow. Wonder where she is; 'stonishin' what became of her. Guesss he's gone into the garden where she could have more room to think of me [*Sees COLONEL.*] What's that? Why, it's Texas. Wonder'fe' knows what a reedicrous figure he's making of himself. I hate a man who don't know how to wear a dress suit. [*Sees MRS. MARRIGOLD.*] Hello! There's the lovely widow, come here to meet me, and being talked to death by a man whose clothes don't fit'im. I'll stop it. Break away! [*COLONEL and MRS. MARRIGOLD start.*] 'Scuse me, just a pleasant little way we brokers have. Mrs. Marrigold, we have missed you; *I* have missed you. I have sought this oper— this oper— this comic opera tune-ity. [*Crosses and forces himself offensively close to MRS. MARRIGOLD.*—to express my appreciation of your magnificent hos— hospi— hospital.

Colonel. [*Crossing L. and taking MRS. M's. hand.*] Allow me, Mrs. Marrigold, to escote you to a moah congenial and less aromatic atmosphere.

[*She rises and drops her handkerchief. COLONEL picks it up with difficulty. She offers to take it.*]

Colonel. Allow me to tote it.

[*Colonel escorts her ceremoniously to door L. I. E. He kisses her handkerchief and passes it to her. She kisses it and runs off L. I. E. COLONEL swells up with satisfaction, turns and sees SPOTT glaring at him.*]

Spott. [*Aside*] I think he's a big bluff. I'll call him. [*Aloud.*] Do you know, sir, that your manner's most offensive.

Colonel. [*Turning quickly.*] Look heah, sah!—[*SPOTT jumps behind his chair R.*] [*Aside.*] I must not quarrel with this vulgar loafer in this lady's house.

Spott. [*Aside.*] I knew it! He 's a chump! [*Comes from behind his chair.*] Yes, sir, I repeat it, sir; 's most 'fensive.

Colonel. [*Turning quickly.*] Do you know, sah—[*Spott gets R as before.*] I 've a great mind, sir— Look heah, Mr.— Mr.—

Spott. Walker, sir; Major Walker, Stock Exchange; and I'm a gentleman, sir.

Colonel. I am very glad, sah, that you mentioned it. When a gentleman assures me that he 's a gentlemen, then I know it; otherwise I might make a mistake.

Spott. [*Aside.*] I thought I 'd settle him. [*Aloud.*] Yes, sir; 's always best to have these things understood. 'S why I mentioned it.

Colonel. Quite right, sah. I am pleased to learn that the gentlemen of the Stock Exchange drink their champagne from celery glasses, also that they soak their crackers in the finger bowl and use the table cloth fo' a napkin. Lik'ise, that they use their napkin fo' a pocket handkerchief, and knock the crumbs out of their whiskers with a foak, yes sah, with a foak.

Spott. [*Swelling up.*] This is pussonal. 'Scuse me, sir; did you intend that to be pussonal?

[*Comes forward. COLONEL turns quickly, SPOTT retreats behind chair.*]

Colonel. [*Aside.*] What nonsense! He's not worth being angry with.

Spott. [*Aside.*] Now I know he's a chump. [*Comes forward.*] Allow me to observe, sir, that your offensive attentions to my dear Mrs. Marrigold——

Colonel. Look heah, sah——[*Turns.* SPOTT retreats behind chair,] if you again soil that lady's name with youah drunken breath, I shall assume the responsibility of getting a pitchfoak, sah, and toting you out to the stable, and dumping you where you belong, sah.

Spott. 'S'gettin' desperate. I've got to make a big bluff or he'll do it. [*Comes forward.*] 'Scuse me, sir, you've made a mistake, sir. 'S'mi card, sir; 's'mi card. [*Fumbles about for card, which he shoves under COLONEL'S nose, and assumes an attitude of drunken dignity against chair.*]

Colonel. [*Suddenly.*] Youah card, sah! [SPOTT jumps as before. COLONEL reads card.] What's this: "Spott and Bleedem, private detectives, (successors to Ketchem and Workem)." [*Aside.*] So! A private detective. I was right at first sight. I must not quarrel with this fellow. He may be made useful to me.

Spott. [*Aside.*] I thought the card would settle him. He's a big Texas bluff. [*Comes forward cautiously.*] [*Aloud.*] Well, sir; well, sir.

Colonel. Really, Majah Walker, I have no desire to be offensive, I assure you, and if——

Spott. Say no more, sir. [SPOTT rushes and grasps COLONEL'S hands effusively.] Say no more. I accept your apology. There's nothing mean about me when it comes to accepting anything.

Colonel. I know it, sah. Anyone could see it sah.

Spott. Certainly; one gentleman can always tell another gentleman by the way his clothes fit.

Colonel. Of course, sah. The tailor makes the gentleman every time, sah.

Spott. Dead sure. [*They move L.*] If you ever want a friend, say nothing, but leave everything to me.

Colonel. I will, sah, of course.

[*They exit arm in arm L. I. E. Enter L. 3 E. PHILLIS, followed by BERNARD CARROLL.*]

Phillis. I am at a loss, Mr. Carroll, to understand why I should be again annoyed with your attentions.

Carroll. Surely, a respectful admiration that has survived two decades of years is worthy being considered something more than an annoyance.

Phillis. Persecution would, perhaps, be a better term.

Carroll. Now, you are angry. But it is encouraging to feel that I have at least overcome your indifference.

Phillis. You gravely err in supposing that I have ever lost faith in my husband's entire innocence, or abandoned the hope that that innocence will, even yet, be fully established and the guilty one, whoever he may be, exposed and brought to justice.

Carroll. None would rejoice more sincerely than myself to see your faith justified.

Phillis. Possibly. Investigators of crime look first for a motive. William Goodall had no possible motive for such baseness. His one error, which was more mine than his, was our secret marriage. This error he frankly confessed, and that confession, so fatally misconstrued by my poor father, drove him forth under a terrible misapprehension. My father was financially wrecked and hurried to his grave, but the junior partner, the creature of his bounty, grew rich and opulent.

Carroll. True. But did I not promptly offer to share that wealth with you if you would avail yourself of your rights, and secure a separation from the criminal?

Phillis. You did. An insult which I scorned then as I scorn it now. Thanks to that criminal's thoughtfulness, that home which he left to his wife and unborn child soon became a modest fortune, which has kept them above worldly needs. This was not the act of a thief and forger. It stands in glowing contrast to the conduct of a man who so poorly judges a woman's heart, that, with the instincts of a huckster, he would bargain for a something which he has not the manhood to appreciate nor the soul to understand. [*Exit PHILLIS L. 3 E.*

Carroll. Years have not changed her heart, nor time softened her resentment. Yet those years have steadily increased my apprehensions. The one thing that could allay them is a marriage with Warren Merrill's daughter, and that seems now more impossible than ever. Night after night sleep is denied me. Each new face and every strange voice startles me. A sudden ring at the bell seems to stop the blood in my veins. Last night, in my restless dreams, I stood again on the old abandoned pier, with the storm raging about me. I went through the terrible struggle, and as all grew still I could see the ghostly face, half under water, floating outward with the tide. The fixed, staring eyes looked wildly into mine. I turned to escape the glassy glare, and woke. Wake to enter upon another day of terror and suspense.

[*He drops into a chair. Small hand-bell rings R. 3 E. for the play. COLONEL ALCHOISTRA escorts MRS. MARRIGOLD to seats R. COR. ARTHUR escorts PHILLIS to seats R. Ladies and gentlemen take seats L. and R., ten to twenty, according to capacity of the stage. CARROLL takes seat in L. COR. SPOTT comes last with no lady and sits L. in disgust, glaring at COLONEL ALCHOISTRA and MRS. MARRIGOLD. Music stops when all are seated. WALLACK, dressed as an old man, enters R. 3 E. and arranges the furniture for the scene. He hangs a small flag on picture L., and puts flowers on table L. as he starts to exit R. 3 E.*]

Spott. [*Applauding.*] Supe! • Supe!

Carroll. [*To SPOTT.*] Don't be an ass.

Spott. I will. Don't be impertinent. I am familiar with the customs and traditions of all well regulated theatres.

A PLAY WITHIN A PLAY.

SCENES FROM THE FOURTH ACT OF A MILITARY DRAMA CALLED

LOVE AND FAME;

OR,

A SOLDIER'S WIFE.

BY THE EMINENT TRAGEDIAN,

F. JUNIUS BETTERTON.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED:

COL. REGINALD WOODLEIGH, . . . F. JUNIUS BETTERTON.
 AMELIA, HIS WIFE, . . . MISS PHŒBE ADAMS.
 ALICE, HIS DAUGHTER, aged 15, . . . MISS DOROTHY GOODALL.
 JONATHAN BARRON, Mrs. Woodleigh's Father, BURTON WALLACK.
 WM. BULL, Servant to Mrs. Woodleigh, . . . REUBEN HAWKINS.

Time, 1865. Scene, the drawing room of MRS. WOODLEIGH'S residence,
 New York City.

[*Enter* AMELIA WOODLEIGH, R. 3 E. *She is dressed richly but quietly. She x's. L. and looks at picture on easel sadly.*]

Amelia. My noble husband! So dearly loved, so thoughtlessly lost, so bitterly mourned. This day he returns in triumph from the war. Will he seek his wife and child, or is his heart indeed, dead alike to affection and memory?

[*Enter* R. 3 E. JONATHAN BARRON.

Barron. Come, come, me cheild, do not stand forever weeping by his portrait.

Amelia. Can you blame me, father? Do you know what day this is? It is the sixteenth anniversary of our marriage. Alice is fifteen to-day. [*Music outside.*] Do you hear that music? A victorious army returns, crowned with triumphant wreathes. The surviving heroes of many battles will be clasped in the loving arms of wives, mothers, sweethearts, lovers and daughters, while here in solitude I wait for one word from him whom I so dearly loved, so foolishly wronged by a cruel doubt. He will pass yonder under my very windows, the windows in which we have passed so many loving hours. The famed soldier whom a nation honors will ride proudly by, casting no glance at his once happy home, giving no sign to his despairing wife or the beautiful daughter whom he has never seen. [*She sits c. weeping.*]

Barron. Poor child! Poor child! Heaven knows that I have tried to do me duty by her. For years I vainly sought him, to bring two loving hearts together. But the earth seemed to have swallowed him. Year after year, through weary days and tedious nights I continued the sleepless shirt—shirtless sleep—sleepless search. I knew I'd go up on that line. The idea of a man writing such infernal language, anyway.

[*ALICE enters from balcony R. E. Music.*]

Alice. O mamma, grandpa, quick, quick, come and see how brave and handsome they look! See the beautiful children throwing flowers under the horses' feet. O, dear! why didn't I have some flowers? [*She runs and gets flowers from table L, and throws them down outside; takes bouquet from her bosom and throws it; then gets flag from picture L. and waves it.*] Take these, and these! I am a soldier's daughter. [*A great cheer outside and music forte. Alice waving flag and throwing kisses.*]

Alice. [*Going to AMELIA.*] O, my sweet mamma. You are crying, and I so gay and thoughtless. Forgive me, mamma, forgive me.

Amelia. There is nothing to forgive, my darling. I want always to see you thus, happy and light-hearted. Do not let my idle tears cause you one serious thought.

[*MR. BULL rushes in R. C. He has on livery coat, large white choker, well around under his ear, trousers in his boot-legs, a wild scraggy-looking red wig. He falls over a chair. Rises, gasps wildly, with his arm in the air. Can't speak.*]

Bull. I knew doggone well I'd forget that stuff.

[*Voice outside L. prompting.*

Voice. The fifth regiment of cavalry.

Bull. The fifth regiment of calvary.

Voice. Cavalry, you fool.

Bull. Cavalry, you fool.

Voice. Is just entering the avenue.

Bull. Is just entering the avenue.

Voice. With Colonel Woodleigh on a snow white steed.

Bull. With Colonel Woodleigh on a snow white sheet.

Voice. Steed.

Bull. Steed.

Voice. Proudly marching at its head.

Bull. Proudly marching on his head.

Voice. Come off, you infernal idiot.

Bull. Come off, you infernal idiot.

Barron. [*To BULL.*] Quick, hurry to the street, attract Colonel Woodleigh's attention, tell him to hasten here, that it is a matter of life and death. Quick! Away!

Bull. I fly.

[*He falls over a piece of furniture and rushes off extravagantly R. U. E.*]

Amelia. O, father! what have you done?

Barron. My duty to both my children.

Amelia. He will not come.

Barron. Then he will be unworthy of your love.

Alice. He will come, my heart tells me so, and I shall see my brave, handsome father at last. [*Music as before. ALICE runs out on veranda c waving handkerchief.*] Yes, mamma, it is he, it is my father; I know him by his portrait there, and now Mr. Bull has caught his eye; he runs along beside the horse. And now the handsome soldier lifts his hat. See, mamma, see, my papa lifts his helmet and waves his plumes at me; and now—

Colonel Woodleigh. [*off L. U. E.*] Battalion halt! [*Bugles sound the "halt."*]

Colonel Woodleigh. [*off L. U. E.*] In place rest. [*Bugles sound "rest," followed by the sound of changing sabers, etc.*]

Amelia. O, my poor heart! how will it end?

Barron. Courage, me child. Let conscious innocence sustain you.

[*Music forte. ALICE has re-entered the room, standing R. C. back. Enter L. U. E. COLONEL WOODLEIGH, full uniform of Colonel of United States cavalry in 1865. He wears wig worn in first Act, face young, reproducing the GOODALL of Act 1. He stops c. Music stops. At sight of him PHILLIS and CARROLL both jump to their feet.*]

Phillis. My God! [*Sinks back in chair.*

Carroll. Goodall! alive!

Colonel Alchostra. [*Aside to MRS. MARRIGOLD.*] What shall we do?

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Aside.*] Wait! Wait! Providence will guide us.

Colonel Woodleigh. [*At back*] Why am I summoned here?

Alice. [*At back.*] You do not know me sir, but I am your daughter.

Colonel Woodleigh. [*Taking her in his arms.*] My child, me cheild! [*Takes her face in his hands.*] Oh yes, I see it now. How like! How like.

Alice. I can see kindness and nobility in your face. The bravest, they say, are always the tenderest. Yonder is a heart that through years of silent anguish has beat for you alone. Have you no word for her?

[*She leads him forward L. c. He assumes a slightly theatrical attitude, mildly reminiscent of the old school. Folds his arms and contracts his brows.*]

Amelia. Reginald, my husband, you see me at your feet, humbled and abashed. My love has not grown cold in all these anxious years. If all love for me is dead, then for the sake of our darling child, *your* child, can you not let the dead past bury its dead?

Colonel Woodleigh. Aye, and reap the Dead Sea's fruit, ashes, ashes, ashes. You did not bid me stay, while yet your voice had power upon me. But now, when glory and ambition have filled the heart where love once reigned supreme, you seek to win me from my new mistress, Fame; is it not so?

Amelia. Cruel, cruel to the last.

[*She sinks down humiliated. COLONEL WOODLEIGH stands stiffly, not having looked at her. ALICE comes between them. She pulls his arms gently apart, taking his right hand in her left. PHILLIS and CARROLL watch the scene with breathless interest. COLONEL ALCHOSTRA and MRS. MARRIGOLD closely observing PHILLIS and GOODALL. As ALICE takes COLONEL WOODLEIGH'S hand, MRS. MARRIGOLD half leads, half forces PHILLIS up R. ALICE, without turning, extends her right hand to take the hand of AMELIA. MRS. MARRIGOLD deftly places the hand of PHILLIS in that of ALICE, gently urging AMELIA aside. Action not seen by ALICE or COLONEL WOODLEIGH.*]

AMELIA expresses surprise, but retires quickly up R. All watch the scene with great interest. SPOTT is asleep.]

Alice. Father, my father, this is the first time I have been permitted to see your face, to hear your voice, or touch your hand. But since my infant lips could frame a word, father has been first in my morning and evening prayers, pleading with the great Parent of all to spare your life, and restore you to those who loved you and waited your coming. Need I say who taught my childish lips those prayers? And now that suffering wife is kneeling at your feet. You are a brave soldier, the world has read of your heroic deeds, and history will blazon your name to posterity. But your noblest victory is yet to be achieved, for he who conquereth himself is far greater than he who taketh a city.

Colonel Woodleigh. [*Aside.*] Had angels voices they would plead like this.

[ALICE places the hand of PHILLIS in that of COLONEL WOODLEIGH and retires up L. C.]

Phillis. William, my darling, let me see your face.

[At sound of her voice COLONEL WOODLEIGH starts. ALICE, seeing PHILLIS, express great surprise, then watches both intently. COLONEL WOODLEIGH quickly recovers his theatrical manner.]

Colonel Woodleigh. Speak the text, don't interpolate. [*Prompts her.*] Reginald, dear Reginald——

Phillis. I do not ask forgiveness for a crime, for none has been committed. [*As she continues speaking, COLONEL WOODLEIGH'S face conveys his conflicting emotions.*] We were both the victims of a terrible misapprehension. My poor father quickly learned it, and died praying for your forgiveness. And now you have come to justify a faith that has never wavered, to claim a love that has ripened with my sorrow and strengthened with the years. Will you not look into my face,

and take me in your arms? See our innocent daughter, who unconsciously placed my hand in yours, is pleading for a father's kiss.

[ALICE moves down on COLONEL WOODLEIGH'S L. *He looks at her half vacantly, then with an effort faces PHILLIS. An exclamation, half shriek, half groan, escapes him. He shudders, passes his hands across his eyes, looks again intently at both, gasps, passes his hand to his left side with an expression of physical pain.*]

Wallack. [*In a suppressed voice.*] The old wound again. I feared it.

[COLONEL WOODLEIGH smiles vacantly, looks into their faces again and shakes his head.]

Colonel W. [*In delirium.*] Why will they torture me so cruelly? For a moment the gates of Paradise stood ajar, and I saw—I saw—

[*He weeps. Music P. P., "Auld Lang Syne."*]

Wallack. His mind is gone again.

[*A shudder and half-suppressed "O, no, no," by the entire group of characters.*]

Colonel Woodleigh. [*With an agonized expression.*] Chaos is come again!

[*He sinks to the floor, supported by his wife and daughter. Characters all bend forward anxiously.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE—*Same as Act III. Mrs. Marrigold seated at work basket L. Arthur at back on veranda, sketching.*

Mrs. Marrigold. What are you doing there, my son?

Arthur. I am sketching the prettiest picture I ever beheld.

Mrs. Marrigold. Indeed! What is it?

Arthur. I shall finish it shortly, and see whether you recognize it.

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Aside.*] Little doubt of that! Poor boy! he can sketch but one face.

Arthur. [*Coming forward.*] Here you are, mother. You are an art critic. What do you see there?

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Taking sketch.*] I see a man seated upon a rustic bench beneath a spreading elm. At his feet two female figures, one on either side, both looking up into his face. They seem a happy group. One might be his wife, the other his daughter. Yes, I think I recognize the group. You have happily caught the face and figure of the daughter.

Arthur. [*Anxiously.*] Do you think so?

Mrs. Marrigold. Do I think so? Why, I declare, the boy is blushing!

Arthur. Well, I'm not ashamed of it.

Mrs. Marrigold. Quite right, my son; never be ashamed of an honest affection. Dorothy is a girl worth waiting for.

Arthur. Worth waiting for. Well I should say she is. But I don't want to wait for her. Any fellow could do that. I want to get her without waiting.

Mrs. Marrigold. Dear me! What a violent first attack! Why you are mere children yet? Dorothy is only seventeen.

Arthur. And how old were you when you ran away from school and married pop?

Mrs. Marrigold. How old was I? why—how old—good gracious! What a question! Why, I was nearly eighteen.

Arthur. Yes, and pop was nearly twenty-two; you're a nice one to talk about waiting, you are.

Mrs. Marrigold. Well, I declare! I shall have to send you back to school again.

Arthur. No, thank you. No more school for me.

Mrs. Marrigold. I intend to send you back to Columbia and make a lawyer of you.

Arthur. Do you! Well before I'm a lawyer you'll be a grandmother!

[*Arthur runs off c. laughing.*]

Mrs. Marrigold. Great Heavens! What is he talking about! A grandmother, indeed! Since that boy became a voter he seems to have grown a foot. Grandma, indeed; Grandma! Grandma! After all, there's something sweet and musical in the name! The happiest hours of my life were passed in teaching that boy's baby lips to say "mamma," and I shall live those hours all over again in teaching his baby's lips to say "Grandma."

[*Enter RUBE HAWKINS c. with his "Sunday clothes" on, "biled shirt," etc. A modern New England hay-seed.*]

Rube. Good mornin'.

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Rising.*] O, good morning, Mr. Hawkins.

Rube. Mr. Hawkins! Pretty soon some one will get the esquire onto that, and then my head'll fill two townships.

Mrs. Marrigold. Won't you be seated?

Rube. No, thank'ee, haven't time. I've brought a kind o' verbal message from the Texas Colonel. After he called here yesterday mornin' and found his friend, the actor chap, so well and strong, he came back to the house in high spirits. There he found a letter from New York, and the minute he read it, he looked at his watch, and saw that he had just time to make the 10.20 train. He told me to come up this mornin'

and say to you that if that Mr. Carroll should come here any-time to-day, you should be sure to keep him here until he gits back to-day.

Mrs. Marrigold. I understand, perfectly. The Colonel and yourself seem to have become fast friends.

Rube. Yes. After I acted out that night he took a great shine to me. And when we all got back hum that night, and every one was a laughin' at me, he jest takes me by the hand and says, says he, never mind, Mr. Hawkins, says he, I've seen wuss actors than you in Texas, not many, but some.

Mrs. Marrigold. No doubt he was right.

Rube. And just as soon as Mr. Betterton was up and about, Mr. Wallack hired me and Phoebe, both, for regular sure-enough actors.

Mrs. Marrigold. Is it possible?

Rube. Yes'm, and next week we're going to play Uncle Tom's Cabin in the schoolhouse at Baldwinsville.

Mrs. Marrigold. Well, I declare!

Rube. Yes'm, and we've been working two days now on make-up and togs, as Mr. Wallack call 'em.

Mrs. Marrigold. I have no doubt but we shall soon hear of you as a star, Mr. Hawkins.

Rube. There she goes again, Mr. Hawkins. [*He slaps himself and starts suddenly.*] [*Aside.*] There goes one of my galluses. I knew something 'd bust if this thing didn't stop. Jest excuse me fer a minute, Mrs. Marrigold, I jest want to step outside and see if it looks like rain.

[*Working up c., holding his trousers. Falls over a piece of furniture, and as he reaches veranda runs into BERNARD CARROLL, who enters L. C. RUBE gives a significant gesture to MRS. MARRIGOLD and exits L. C.*]

Carroll. Good morning, Mrs. Marrigold. I trust you will pardon my coming unannounced.

Mrs. Marrigold. Don't mention it, Mr. Carroll; this is Democracy Hall, you know. Be seated.

Carroll. [*Sitting R.*] Thank you.

Mrs. Marrigold. Are you just up from New York.

Carroll. This moment. And I grieve to say the bearer of ill news.

Mrs. Marrigold. Ill news! For me?

Carroll. No; for your guests, Mr. and Mrs. Goodall.

Mrs. Marrigold. Is it possible? They must be spared for a time, at least. Only a week ago to-day this poor man returned to consciousness, and yesterday for the first time he ventured out of doors.

Carroll. I am aware of that.

Mrs. Marrigold. Indeed?

Carroll. That is to say, I knew, of course, that he had been quite unwell, following the unexpected meeting with his wife and daughter.

Dorothy. [*Outside L. C.*] O, papa, come and see this beautiful bed of pansies and forget-me-nots.

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Rising, aside.*] They are coming. Mr. Carroll, may I ask you to step into the library for a time? I have not the heart at present to see one shadow cross these happy faces.

[*Music, "Auld Lang Syne."* MRS. MARRIGOLD and CARROLL exit R. I. E. Enter from veranda GOODALL, PHILLIS and DOROTHY. He has an arm about each. His costume similar to Act II.]

Phillis. Now, you must sit down, Will, dear.

Dorothy. Yes, you must.

Goodall. Why will you foolish children try to make an invalid of me? [*He sits.*] Oh, well, I am love's captive, and must e'en bear with meekness her golden fetters.

[*They are seated at his feet.*

Dorothy. And I have a papa, a real papa, all my own. I often wondered why it was that I so loved to be near you, to look into your face and hear you call me your sweet Violet.

Goodall. And now we know.

Dorothy. Yes, now we know.

Goodall. And now I know why each day I grew more anxious for your coming, and why the sky seemed brighter when you came.

Phillis. And for nearly a month we were within sound of each other's voices.

Goodall. How long have I been ill?

Phillis. Four weeks in all.

Dorothy. For two weeks you were in a raging fever, and thought that you were in the spirit-world vainly seeking us. The fever all came from the old wound in your side, but the big bullet came away, and the doctor says the wound will never trouble you again.

Phillis. After two weeks you grew calmer, through exhaustion and showed symptoms of returning reason.

Dorothy. Yes, and then they hurried mamma and I away from you. The doctor said that you must not see our faces at first, as it might undo all his work.

Phillis. For a week your mind hovered on the verge of reason.

Dorothy. Yes, and still they wouldn't let us see you. But just a week ago to-day, after the doctor had gone, and there was no one in the room but that dear faithful Mr. Wallack, mamma and I opened the door gently. Your face was towards us, your eyes open. For a moment you stared at us, and then we were both frightened, but the next moment you smiled, and your eyes said "come to me." We knelt at your bed side, and kissed you, then you kissed mamma's hand and whispered "Phillis," then you kissed mine and said, "My sweet Violet."

Phillis. And then we knew that God had given you back to us.

Goodall. When all else had failed, *love came.*

Phillis. And then your strength returned as if by magic.

Dorothy. Yes, and your appetite, too. And that doctor wanted to starve you on gruel. But each day, as soon as he was out of the room Mrs. Marrigold would broil a big porter-house steak, and then we'd all sit around the bed and watch you eat it. And in the evening the doctor would come in, feel your pulse, and look wise, and say we might put a few drops of beef extract in your gruel, and we all nearly choking trying to keep from laughing.

Goodall. Now, don't abuse the doctors. If they cannot always perform miracles, they can at least entertain us, while nature is fighting the enemy.

[*Enter MRS. MARRIGOLD R. I. E.*

Mrs. Marrigold. [*Aside.*] I don't wonder the picture inspired Arthur.

Goodall. [*Rising.*] Our hostess.

Mrs. Marrigold. Still sweet-hearting! Why, look at the color in his face.

Dorothy. I was just telling mamma that he looks almost as young and handsome as he did in the play, with his wig and uniform on.

Goodall. Throw physic to the dogs. I am more favored than the Thane of Cawdor, for I have found the antidote for a mind diseased.

[*The lights behind the arches darken, and a distant peal of thunder is heard.*]

Dorothy. [*Running up c.*] O, dear! there's a storm coming up. See how dark it's getting, and this evening we were to have our dinner on the lawn.

Mrs. Marrigold. The clouds are gathering, but let us hope that they will pass us, for this day at least.

Goodall. Life is to-day so full of sunlight that we can laugh away a few passing clouds.

Mrs. Marrigold. I want you good people to amuse yourselves for a time in the music room.

Dorothy. All right ! Come, papa, and I'll sing to you about the girl you left behind you.

Phillis. But he found her waiting when he returned.

Goodall. I found two of them.

Dorothy. [*Throwing her arms about his neck and kissing him.*] Then I'll sing it twice.

[DOROTHY and GOODALL *exit* L. I. E.]

Phillis. Madge, dear, something has happened ; I saw it in your face the moment you came in. Have you had bad news ?

Mrs. Marrigold. Nothing of importance, dear. Tell me, has Colonel Alchostra not yet told you the character of the important information he has to impart ?

Phillis. No. He expected to have told me on the evening of the play, but the unexpected ending of the scene and poor Will's terrible illness prevented. Since then he has assured me that as soon as Will was on his feet again he would give us a pleasant surprise. He is engaged in some kind of an investigation, and is not yet quite ready to "show his hand," as he expresses it.

Mrs. Marrigold. Then we may rest easy that when Colonel Tom does show his hand, it will contain both bowers and the ace.

Phillis. I fear, Madge, dear, that partiality biases you just a little in the direction of the handsome Texan.

Mrs. Marrigold. What nonsense you do talk.

Phillis. Do, I ? Do you know, dear, that in our own happiness we are liable to forget that our youngsters are no longer children ?

Mrs. Marrigold. Yes, I've been reminded of it quite recently.

Phillis. Poor Arthur is in the garden, a picture of dejection, and Dora actually sighed as we passed him. I'm going to send her out to cheer him up a bit. [*Exit PHILLIS R. I. E.* COLONEL ALCHOISTRA enters L. C. *hurriedly*].

Colonel Alchostra. Good morning, my dear Mrs. Marrigold; you will pardon me for running in like a wild animal, but I wah a little anxious. Mr. Carroll has been here?

Mrs. Marrigold. He is there.

Colonel Alchostra. Good; I came on the same train, but had some papers to get befo' coming up. Goodall still grows stronger?

Mrs. Marrigold. Yes, indeed; he's like his old self to-day.

Colonel. How could it be otherwise? With such nursing, I fancy I should want to be an invalid indefinitely.

Mrs. Marrigold. How can we manage to get you on the sick list, Colonel?

Colonel. I hardly know, I am so beastly well. There is a way, however.

Mrs. Marrigold. Indeed?

Colonel. Yes, ma'm. It is what lawyers would call a pre-misable case. Now, premising that I should summon the courage to ask you to grant me a great boon and you should decline—then I should decline from that moment.

Mrs. Marrigold. Dear me! Then I must avoid the responsibility of driving you into a decline.

Colonel. Say no moah, my dear Mrs. Marrigold, say no moah! At the proper time I shall confess judgment and throw myself on the mercy of the coat. But now we must think of others.

Mrs. Marrigold. True, our dear friends there.

Colonel. In these beautiful rooms, one month ago, we witnessed the second act of a domestic drama. To-day I hope to present the "last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history," as Mr. Shakespeare puts it.

Mrs. Marrigold. If the end brings happiness to our friends I shall owe you a debt of gratitude.

Colonel. And I shall expect payment on demand.

[DOROTHY and ARTHUR appear c.

Mrs. Marrigold. I shall always honor my note of hand.

[*She gives him her hand. He kisses it.*

Colonel. O, my deah Mrs.—

[*He is about to take her in his arms.*

Dorothy and Arthur. Change for Texas!

Mrs. Marrigold. What was that?

Colonel. I distinctly heard some one say, Change for Texas.

[*MRS. MARRIGOLD goes up R. protesting with ARTHUR in dumb show. ARTHUR laughing at her. DOROTHY comes down c. to COLONEL.*]

Dorothy. Do you remember the time you told us to "change kears?" We are even with you now.

Colonel. Even! I think we owe you one.

Dorothy. You're a very lucky man to win such a prize. Auntie Marrigold might take her choice from among the best in the land.

Colonel. [*Swelling with satisfaction.*] Of course! Of course! She has, no doubt, many admirers.

Dorothy. Admirers! Well, I should say so. Twice as many as any of the young girls, and she does enjoy teasing them. But the funniest affair of all was last summer. Arthur brought one of his college chums up here, and he fell desperately in love with auntie. She laughed at him at first, but it was a real serious case. Then she tried to reason with him. The idea of trying to reason with a man who is in love! Then he wrote poetry about her. Then he said that he would commit

suicide. Finally he actually urged her to elope with him. Then auntie took him into the library and gave him a good scolding, but that only made him worse. Finally she said to him: "Why, Willie, I'm old enough to be your mother. I can't marry you, but if you insist upon becoming a member of the family, why I'll adopt you." [*They both laugh heartily.*] Arthur and I were both behind a screen listening, and when she said that we just pushed the screen over and roared. [*They laugh heartily.*]

[MRS. MARRIGOLD and ARTHUR advance L.

Mrs. Marrigold. Young lady, are you telling tales out of school?

Dorothy. O, no, Auntie.

Colonel. [*Imitating DOROTHY'S tone.*] O, no, Aun—No! No! No!

Dorothy. No, indeed. I was just telling the Colonel how glad I am that he is to be one of the family—I mean—I mean—you know what I mean.

Colonel. Certainly, of course.

Dorothy. I mean that, next to my mamma, I have loved my Auntie Marrigold, better than anyone in the world. [*She kisses MRS. MARRIGOLD.*] And I love you, sir, because you have been the means of bringing a great joy into our home and our hearts.

Colonel. No, child, no. We have all been humble instruments in the hands of Providence. But our mission is still unfulfilled. [X. L.] With your permission, Mrs. Marrigold, I will prepare Mr. and Mrs. Goodall for the new trial which is before them. [*Exit COLONEL ALCHOSTRA L. I. E.*]

Dorothy. You are not angry with me, auntie?

Mrs. Marrigold. Angry! Could I be angry with a sun-beam?

[*She kisses DOROTHY, and ARTHUR and DOROTHY run out c.*

BERNARD CARROLL enters R. I. E.]

Carroll. My time is limited, Mrs. Marrigold, and, unpleasant as my mission is, I think it best that I should see the unfortunate man at once.

Mrs. Marrigold. If you will excuse me I will advise them of your presence. [*Exit* MRS. MARRIGOLD, L. I. E.]

Carroll. It is a bold game, but, in its success lies my only security. I am confident that Goodall's appearance here was purely accidental; yet, some secret eye is prying into the past. Strange that nothing further has ever been heard of that mysterious advertiser in the *Herald*. [*He sits* L. SPOTT enters c., *very extravagant suit, tight-fitting trick coat to split up back.*]

Spott. Ah! here we are again, as they say at the circus. I had orders to keep out of sight until wanted, but I couldn't resist the desire to get a peep at the charming widow. [*Sees* CARROLL.] Great Scott!

Carroll. [*Surprised.*] What has brought you here, sir?

Spott. A powerful motive, sir.

Carroll. Motive? What motive?

Spott. With apologies to the chestnut man, it was a locomotive?

Carroll. You're an ass.

Spott. Am I? Thank you. You've said that once or twice before. However, the ass is a patient animal. Were you ever kicked by an ass?

Carroll. No, but I have been barked at by a jackal. [*Going up c.*] What brings that fellow here?

Spott. Funny fellow, that. It is astonishing how short-sighted some of these smart alecks are.

[SPOTT retires up c. and quietly exits c. Enter L. I. E., GOODALL, PHILLIS, MRS. MARRIGOLD, COLONEL ALCHOISTRA. GOODALL carries a large Mss. which he is reading. CARROLL advances; all bow.]

Goodall. You have a communication of some character for me, sir?

Carroll. Had we not better confer alone?

Goodall. You can have nothing to say to me, sir, that I should be unwilling for these dear friends to hear.

Carroll. As you will, sir. My task is a most unpleasant one, but none the less a duty to you and to myself. Notwithstanding your crime, which wrecked the firm of Merrill & Carroll, my personal feelings toward you and yours have been of the kindest. In that spirit I now hasten to warn you of a threatening danger, and to suggest a means of avoiding it.

Goodall. Had I a thousand ears I'd hear thee.

Carroll. By some unfortunate means, your identity, so long successfully concealed, has become known in New York, as well as your presence here.

Goodall. We are aware of that fact. Also, that for a month a detective has been watching this place. [*CARROLL starts.*] Placed here, no doubt, by some kind, thoughtful friend like yourself. So far you have told us nothing new.

Carroll. The heirs and survivors of some of the families wrecked by your crimes have determined to secure your arrest and prosecution. I am here to urge upon you the wisdom of avoiding this arrest and exposure, which must bring disgrace and humiliation to those dear to you.

Goodall. And what do you advise?

Carroll. There is but one course—flight and residence abroad.

Goodall. Flight! From what? From whom?

Carroll. From the vengeance of those who have determined upon your prosecution. Your arrest will certainly follow within the next twelve hours. Under a foreign government you can live in security. If I may do so without offending, I will willingly place means at your disposal, to be repaid at your convenience.

Goodall. Is there on record a court decision pronouncing me a criminal?

Carroll. Not exactly. But the overwhelming evidence, added to your own confession, flight and subsequent career under an assumed name, would seem to constitute a *prima facie* case.

Goodall. O, learned judge! A Daniel come to judgment! And may I now ask what motive has moved you to this generous action?

Carroll. Sympathy for an erring man, and profound respect for the lady who bears his name.

Goodall. Have you done?

Carroll. I think I have said enough.

Goodall. So say we all. Now to answer *in extenso*. I shall not go into exile at present. I am, first of all things, sir, an American, native and to the manner born, and this country is quite good enough for me.

Carroll. Then I must apologize for trying to be your friend. I wish you all good day.

[*He stirs up*, DOROTHY and ARTHUR enter C. and advance L.

Goodall. A word before you go. [*He motions CARROLL to a seat. He sits.*] Let us nothing extenuate or set down aught in malice. I have done the State some service, and they know it. Your anxiety lest I should have to do the State more service of an involuntary character places me under an obligation, and, beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks. Yet I am not ungrateful. To prove it, I will read you a scene from my new drama. The play will be called, *After Many Years*.

It tells the story of a Federal soldier, who was wounded in battle; a Confederate officer carried him tenderly to the hospital. At the end of the war, the Federal and Confederate soldiers became fast friends, and for many years were in business together in Texas. One day the Northerner was stricken with a fever. He felt it to be fatal. He summoned

friends who were near and said: "I am called for the last muster. The name by which you have known me is not my own. Take down my dying confession and have it witnessed that I may swear to it while my mind is clear. In New York City, in 1861, I was book-keeper for a banking firm. I committed forgery for a small amount. The junior partner discovered my crime, but, instead of exposing me, he held it over my head, compelling me to sign innumerable documents. By these forgeries the bank was wrecked, but all available funds had been transferred to the private fortune of the junior partner. Those forgeries were charged to an innocent man, who, indignant and humiliated, entered the army, leaving a bride and her unborn child. For two years I suffered the torments of the damned. Then I wrote the man who had ruined me that I had resolved to tell the truth and take my punishment, which he must share. He wrote me to meet him that night, which I did. For an hour we walked through dark, silent streets. At midnight we were seated on an old East River pier. He offered bribes, which I refused. Suddenly I felt a sharp, stinging pain in my left side, under the shoulder blade. The next thing that I remembered was lying on a rude bench, surrounded by strange men. I had been picked up by a boat's crew. I was then on board a coasting schooner bound for the Chesapeake. Believing that I was about to die, I called for pen and paper, and told this story exactly as related here; I signed it, and the captain and crew witnessed it. But I was not then to die. On my recovery, knowing the folly of a man who is poor and friendless contending with one who was rich and powerful, I entered the Federal army under an assumed name. The rest you know.

[CARROLL *has been listening with breathless interest.*

Carroll. [*Half suppressed.*] My God!

[*All look at Carroll.*

Goodall. Mr. Carroll is not well. Does the plot of the drama weary you?

Carroll. [*Calmly.*] O, not at all; I'm quite interested.

Colonel Alchostra. We thought you would like it.

Carroll. But, really, as it is nearly train time, I fear I must tear myself away.

Goodall. The climax is yet to come. The dying man's confession concludes as follows: "The banking firm was that of Merrill & Carroll. The name of the falsely accused man was William Goodall; the name of the junior partner and my would-be assassin was Bernard Carroll.

"Signed:

PHILIP HAWLEY.

"*Witnesses:*

"THOMAS ALCHOSTRA,

"MOSES J. MASON,

"JOHN SOTO.

"*Alchostra Ranch, near Austin, May 4th, 1879.*"

Carroll. Really, Mr. Goodall, your cleverness in conceiving thrilling climaxes is equalled only by your skill in reciting them.

Goodall. Praise from Sir Hubert is praise, indeed.

Carroll. But, seriously, the plot of your drama is absurdly weak, in presuming that a dead man's confession, unsupported by corroborative evidence, would give your hero any standing in a court of law.

Goodall. Aye, there's the rub. You are a close observer and an intelligent critic. The one thing to corroborate the dying man's confession would be the confession made in 1863 on board the schooner, or the evidence of some person there present.

[SPOTT *enter* L. C.

Colonel Alchostra. Possibly our detective friend can supply a link that will strengthen the plot.

Spott. [*Coming forward* R.] Leave everything to me.
[SPOTT *reads from memo.*] Captain Sturgis, of schooner

Martha Hale, and James Dean, second officer, both now living at Bangor, Maine. Both remember the incident perfectly, and will testify at any time. But have no knowledge of the written confession, as they did not see it after witnessing it.

Carroll. I fear, Mr. Goodall, you will have to invent a new plot for your drama. This one is theatrical, but not novel, and you fail to preserve the unities. But really you must excuse me. [*He starts up c.*]

Goodall. One moment; we are coming to the unities.

Spott. Leave everything to me. [*SPOTT reads.*] Memoranda: From records of Ketchem & Workem; file, 13, 1863. The confession herewith attached was bought from a sailor; no name given; written on bill of lading of schooner Martha Hale; price paid, \$50; N. Q.: no questions; K. D.: keep dark, B. M. L. O.: big money later on. [*Speaks.*] The firm of Spott & Bleedem succeeded to the business and records of Ketchem & Workem in 1872. The late Workem was my honored father-in-law. Excuse this tear. A satisfactory consideration having been paid, Colonel Thomas Alchostra is now in absolute possession of the confession referred to; also the letter written by Bernard Carroll on April 30, 1863, to Philip Hawley, requesting the interview.

Carroll. [*To SPOTT.*] You miserable cur!

Spott. Don't call names. We are both in it for what there is in it, only you got more than I did.

Carroll. Have I not rewarded your miserable services with princely generosity?

Spott. You have. I may say that you ante'd blindly, but the Texas Colonel straddled the blind, and raised the ante.

[*CARROLL sinks into a seat. SPOTT goes up c., and quietly sits at table on which is decanter and glasses. During rest of scene he fills up and goes to sleep.*]

Goodall. [*X'ing to CARROLL.*] You see, we have not forgotten the unities. Mr. Carroll, the great joy that to-day fills this

household leaves in our hearts no room for anger, resentment or revenge. You will be allowed one week in which to make restitution to the daughter of Warren Merrill. You best know the amount of which you robbed her father. Restore it and go your way in peace. These documents will secure your good conduct in the future.

Carroll. By this act, you leave me without a weapon of aggression or defense. Within forty-eight hours the restitution shall be complete. I beg that you will allow me to withdraw.

[*Goodall steps aside and motions CARROLL to depart. All rise and incline their heads, as he makes his exit R. I. E.*

Mrs. Marrigold. That was nobly done, Mr. Goodall.

Dorothy. I hope he will appreciate it.

Phillis. He will. It is never too late to mend.

Colonel Alchostra. And while the lamp holds out to burn the vilest sinner will continue business at the old stand, or words to that effect.

[*Enter L. C. PHŒBE, RUBE and WALLACK. PHŒBE is extravagantly made up for Aunt Ophelia, WALLACK for Marks, and RUBE, ludicrously, for Lagree. They drop down into R. COR. WALLACK carries his champagne basket on which he sits. Other characters are all L.*

Wallack. Me lord, the players have come.

Goodall. Ah! the tragedians of the city. How chances it they travel?

Wallack. This is a little summer snap. Colonel, we are here to offer our congratulations upon your recovery, and to say *au revoir* before starting *en tour*.

Goodall. *En tour?*

Wallack. Yes, Colonel. In these happily changed conditions, you will not require the services of a manager, agent, valet, stage director, property man, and factotum in ordinary,

hence I resign those numerous functions. To-morrow, at Baldwinsville, we begin rehearsals of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Phæbe. Yes, I'm to play five characters, including Little Eva and Aunt Ophelia.

Wallack. I shall assume my great role of Marks the Lawyer, doubling Gumption Cute and Fletcher incidentally.

Rube. Yes, sir, and I'm to play—what do I play?

Wallack. You play the donkey and Lagree, sir.

Rube. Yes, I play the donkey and the greaser.

Wallack. Who said greaser?

Rube. You did.

Wallack. I said Lagree, sir.

Rube. That's what I said, the greaser.

Phæbe. Yes, and we just came up to let you see our new costumes.

Goodall. You are welcome, masters, welcome all. [*To Rube, who wears a long chin whisker.*] Thy face is valanced since I saw thee last. Comest thou to beard us in Denmark?

Rube. [*To WALLACK.*] What do I say now?

Wallack. Say nothing. The donkey don't talk.

Rube. Oh!

Goodall. [*To PHÆBE.*] Your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw thee last, by the altitude of a chopin. [*Referring to her high poke bonnet.*] You are welcome to Elsinore. [*Taking WALLACK'S hand.*] You have been as one in suffering all that suffers nothing. A man whom fortune's buffets and rewards has taken with equal thanks. You shall star, but not in *Uncle Tom*. Perish the thought. I will present you with the manuscript of my new war drama.

Wallack. Very kind of you Colonel, but there seems to be a glut of war plays, and, as walking is bad, we'll stick to the old chestnut.

Phillis. Will, dear, you are likely to lose your daughter almost as soon as found.

Goodall. I guessed it. To love, to marry and to be given in marriage is the divine law; so be it. In your young loves, my own lost youth breathes musical.

Wallack. [*Half aside.*] The only Richelieu.

Rube. [*To PHÆBE.*] Who was Richelieu?

Phæbe. He wrote Uncle Tom.

Rube. O. [*SPOTT rises and looks about; he's half drunk.*

Spott. This happy family have lost sight of their benefactor. [*Comes forward R. c. effusively.*] Ah, ladies! Permit me to congratulate this happy family.

Wallack. He has escaped from the happy family.

Phæbe. He looks it.

Spott. 'S'appy family upon this ausp—auspi—hospital occasion. Don't thank me, I simply did my duty. I have cast my bread upon the waters—upon the waters—waters.

Colonel. Cast your bread upon the waters, and after many days the sharks will get it, or words to that effect.

Spott. 'Zactly! I knew it, but I forgot it. Mrs. Marrigold, I am proud to grasp you by the hand. [*SPOTT crosses L., tries to take MRS. M's. hand. She turns from him.*] Your hand, under these 'sappy circu—cir—circuses. Should you at any future time require the services of a man of observation, sobriety and discretion, leave everything to me.

[*He has been fumbling for a card, which he shoves in her face.*

Colonel. [*Coming behind SPOTT.*] Excuse me, ladies; this annoys you. I will remove it.

[*COLONEL takes SPOTT by coat collar and throws him around c. Trick coat opens up back. Collar and cravat fly off. COLONEL drags him up c. and throws him bodily over the veranda and quietly returns.*]

Mrs. Marrigold. Why, Colonel, do you not fear this fellow's resentment?

Colonel Alchostra. O, no, ma'am; he belongs to that class which we throw out when we are done using them. He's used to it, ma'am.

Dorothy. [*Running up c., then returning.*] Mamma! papa! See! all of the clouds have passed away, and there wasn't a drop of rain after all the thunder.

Colonel. The thunder was a big bluff, and it didn't go.

Dorothy. The sun is shining brightly; the birds are singing beautifully; we can have our dinner under the trees after all, can't we, Auntie?

Mrs. Marrigold. Yes, dear.

Dorothy. O, won't it be jolly! There's not a cloud left in the sky.

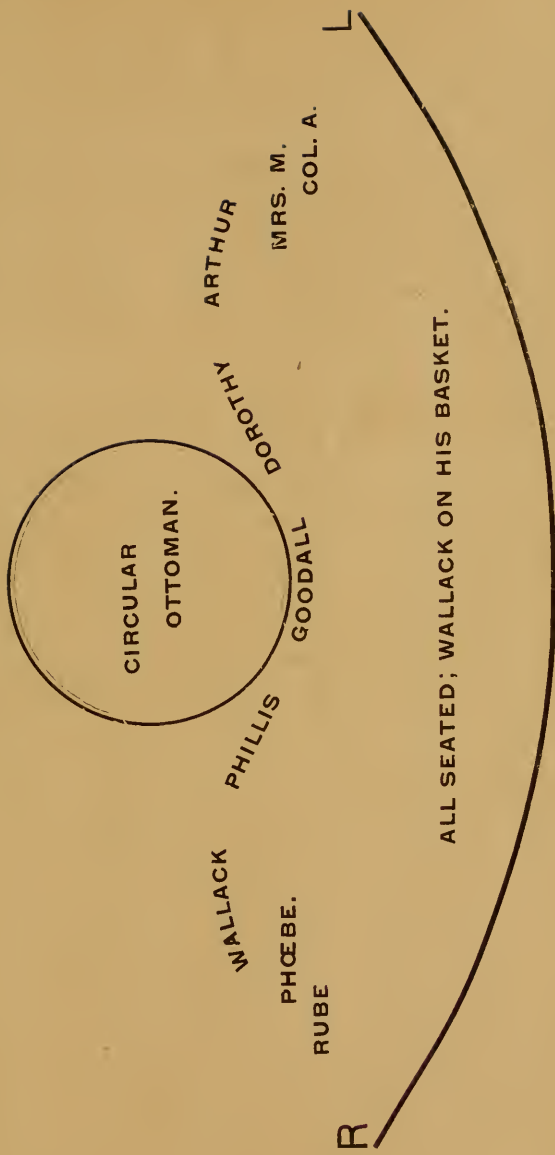
Goodall. And so the shadow passes from our lives. Let us throw wide each window of our hearts, that love's sunlight may enter in,

[*Music p. p. "Auld Lang Syne."*]

Goodall. [*Suddenly.*] Yet stay! An inspiration! That nothing may be wanting that could add to the general joy of the whole company, I will read to you my new drama.

[*He reaches for Mss. WALLACK groans. Music swells forte.*]

CURTAIN.







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